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HARVARD LAW LIBRARY

Rec'd Sept 6th 1814.

CASES

ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN

THE SUPREME COURT

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA,

FROM

DECEMBER TERM, 1826,

TO

JUNE TERM, 1828.

HARVARD LAW SCHOOL LIBRARY.

BY THOMAS P. DEVEREUX,

REPORTER, &c.

VOL. I.

RALEIGH:

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1829.

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The Subscriber also begs leave to acknowledge the obligation, he is under to a professional friend, who was kind enough to prepare the very excellent index which accompanies this volume.

T. P. DEVEREUX.

Raleigh, April 7th, 1829.

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CASES

ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN THE

SUPREME COURT

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA.

DECEMBER TERM 1826.

John Shamburger
v.
Alexander Kennedy,
adm'r of Wm. Hussey, dec. } From Moore.

An agent cannot be appointed by *parol* to convey real estate for his principal. But where a levy on personals was made under a *fi. fa.* and lands, in lieu thereof, were sold by the Sheriff, without levy or advertisement, at the request of the debtor, and bid off by A, and B paid the sum bid to the Sheriff, under a parol agreement that the Sheriff should convey to him: *Held*, that as an *official* act of the Sheriff, his deed passed the estate.

In 1822, one *Isham Sheffield* obtained judgment and sued out execution thereon against *Hussey*, the Defendant's intestate, one *Garner*, and others. The execution was levied by *M'Neil*, the Sheriff, upon the personal property of *Hussey*, who was the principal debtor. On the day of sale, at the request of *Hussey*, the Sheriff sold his real estate, which had not been levied on, in lieu of the personal property, and the same was purchased by *Garner*, at a sum greater than the amount of the judgment, and he being then unable to pay, the Sheriff indulged him until the term at which the execution was returnable, at which time the Plaintiff paid to the Sheriff the

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Shamburger v. Kennedy.

amount of *Garner's* bid, upon an agreement between the Plaintiff, *Hussey*, and *Garner*, that the Sheriff, or *Hussey*, or both, as the Plaintiff might prefer, should convey to him. The Plaintiff accordingly took possession of the lands, and the Sheriff executed to him an official deed in the usual form. Afterwards the Defendant's intestate dying without having released or conveyed, and the Plaintiff supposing that the deed from the Sheriff conveyed no title, brought this action to recover back the money paid.

On the trial, in the Court below, his honor Judge NORWOOD was of opinion, that the deed from *M'Neil*, whether he were considered as Sheriff, acting under the authority of the writ, or as the agent of the Defendant's intestate, under the parol agreement, was sufficient, under the circumstances, to pass the title, and directed a nonsuit; whereupon the Plaintiff appealed.

HALL, Judge, delivered the opinion of the Court:

The deed executed by *M'Neil*, the Sheriff, to the Plaintiff, being an official act, conveyed a good and valid title—(3 *Murph.* 507.) In the other view of the case taken by the Judge, supposing the Sheriff did not act officially, but as the agent of *Hussey*, I do not concur, unless *M'Neil* had been duly authorised, by a written Power of Attorney, to execute the deed for him. An authority by *parol* would not be sufficient, because titles to land must be evidenced by written conveyances. I think the nonsuit ought not to be set aside.

PER CURIAM,

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

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William Morisey & Wife
v.
David Bunting, sen'r.
} From Sampson.

In a parol gift, deliberation and sedateness, on the part of the donor, is only evidence of the *animus disponendi*.

It seems, that if *non detinet* and the *statute of limitations* are both pleaded, and the jury find "all the issues in favor of the Defendant," this Court will not examine the correctness of the charge on the latter plea.

When B. said he had given negro C. to A. held, that the will of B. of that date, is admissible to explain his declarations.

Detinue for negro slaves, pleas *non detinet*, *statute of limitations*.—On the trial, before Norwood, Judge, the Plaintiffs claimed title by a parol gift made in 1802 from the Defendant to the Plaintiff, *Ann* his daughter, and offered evidence of such gift. The witnesses who testified thereto, stated that Defendant said he would keep the slave till *Ann* married, or during his life, and that at this time, the Defendant had been drinking until he felt it, though not drunk. The Plaintiff then proved by a witness, that the Defendant in 1812, said he had given the slave to his daughter *Ann*, upon which the Defendant called another witness present when this declaration was made, who proved that afterwards, on the same day, the Defendant said he had made a will, and Defendant's Counsel offered to give in evidence the will referred to, by which the negro was given to *Ann*. This evidence was opposed, but was received by the Judge, not as direct evidence as to the title, but as a matter proper to be considered by the Jury, together with the declaration of the Defendant, that he had *given* the negro, in order to ascertain his meaning in that expression. It was further in evidence, that the slaves in question, remained in the keeping and under the control of the Defendant after the gift, up to the time of *Ann's* intermarriage with the other Plaintiff, and that more than three years had elapsed after she came of full age, before the marriage

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and the commencement of this suit. And it also appeared that *Ann*, being an infant of tender years, residing with her father at the time of the alleged gift, continued to reside with him until her marriage, shortly after which, suit was commenced. On this evidence, two questions were made; whether a gift had been proved, and if so, whether the action was barred by the statute—on the latter point, the Plaintiff's Counsel insisted that the Defendant was a trustee for *Ann*, and therefore his possession could not be set up, by him, against her claim. The Judge instructed the Jury, that supposing the gift made, the Defendant was in possession as the *bailee*, and not the *trustee* of *Ann*, and therefore not within the rule referred to by the Plaintiff's Counsel, which was confined to pure trusts, cognizable in a Court of Equity, and was not applicable to bailees in a Court of Law. That to bar the Plaintiff, a possession adverse, and continued for three years after she came of full age, must be shewn, and that the possession taken by the Defendant under the void reservation of a life estate to himself, would be consistent with the title of *Ann*, until the Defendant did some act, or made some declaration, which changed the nature of his possession; that if he claimed the property as his own, and treated it as such, this would render his possession adverse, whether she had express knowledge of the fact or not. Upon the evidence relating to the gift, the Judge instructed the Jury, that as no consideration, in cases of gift, passes from the donee to the donor, the law requires every parol gift to be a sedate, deliberate act, and therefore incautious expressions, or expressions used when the speaker was in a state of inebriety, would not be sufficient.

The Jury found "all the issues in favor of the Defendant." A new trial was moved for, on the ground of misdirection, and the admission of improper evidence, which being refused, and judgment given upon the verdict, the Plaintiff appealed.

Badger, for the Plaintiff.—1st. The Judge erred in admitting the will to be read. The declaration it was admitted to qualify, was a general one in its terms; the presumption from it was, that an effectual gift had been made. The Defendant cannot be permitted to prove *his own* act, in order to qualify *his own* declarations.

2d. The charge as to the act of limitations is wrong; there is no difference in its operation between the cases of a trustee and bailee. Both are founded upon the ground, that the possession of the trustee or bailee is not inconsistent with the rights of the owner. The Statute never begins to run until a cause of action has accrued; this only could have arisen after a demand by the daughter, and a refusal on the part of the Defendant. In establishing the rule as to trusts, equity has followed the law.

3d. The charge is erroneous in making a difference as to the degree of *caution* and *sobriety* necessary to a gift, and that necessary to a sale. A capacity and an intent are all that is necessary to both; the only difference between them is, that one is good without delivery, the other is revocable until a delivery is made.

Gaston, for the Defendant.—1st. The will was properly received: the question of fact between the parties was, whether by the expression used, the Defendant meant that he had given the negroes in question to his daughter, absolutely by deed, or revocably, by will. The fact of his having made a will was pertinent to this issue, as explanatory of his declaration.

2d. The charge is correct as to the statute of limitations. It is not pleadable in cases of direct trusts: but this doctrine is confined to trusts of equitable origin, and does not apply to legal claims, although founded on a breach of confidence. Every action of detinue is founded on a bailment, but they are barred. The charge is especially correct, because the Defendant held at the will of his daughter.

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3d. The law does make a distinction between a gift, and a sale;—more deliberation is necessary to the former, than to the latter. The valuable consideration creates a difference in favor of the latter; whereas, in the former, words are the only evidence of the transaction.

Badger in reply.—It is true, that every action of Detinue is founded upon a supposed bailment; but it is also founded upon the supposition, that a demand and refusal has been made, after which the statute begins to run and not before.

HALL Judge, delivered the opinion of the Court.—The Judge charged the Jury in this case, "That as no consideration passes from the donee to the donor, the law requires every parol gift to be a sedate, deliberate act, and therefore incautious expressions, or expressions used in a state of inebriety, would not be sufficient."

It is objected that the charge is incorrect, that a gift is good, if the person making it, had the use of his understanding, and was in earnest when he made it; although he did it without sedateness or deliberation, and was, at the time, in a state of intoxication.

I understand the Judge, and the Counsel, both to mean, that every gift, in order to be valid, must have the free assent of the donor to it. The Judge considered deliberation and sedateness as evidence of that assent, but that incautious expressions, coming from a drunken man, were not. He did not say, that more deliberation was necessary in making a gift, than a sale; if he meant that, I do not coincide with him in opinion. The free assent of the party is as indispensable in the one case, as in the other. I am inclined to believe that the Jury were not misled by the Judge's charge in that respect.

As the Jury have found for the Defendant, on the plea of *non detinet*, it seems to be useless to say any thing relative to the charge, as to the statute of limitations. I will only observe, assuming it as a fact, that the Defend-

ant was a Trustee, that nothing emanating from him would change that character, and put the statute of limitations into operation in his favor.

It appears that Defendant had given negro Cloe to his daughter Ann, by his will, but had not given her all Cloe's children, which she had after the alleged gift; and *that*, after the date of the will, he made declarations, that he had given Cloe to his daughter Ann; the Defendant introduced the will, although objected to by the Plaintiffs, to explain to the Jury what was meant by those declarations; namely, that he meant he had given her by his will. I can see no objection to this evidence; and from the view which I have taken of the whole case, I think the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

Margaret McDonald
v.
Kennith Murchison. } From Moore.

In an action for words, charging the Plaintiff with perjury in a particular suit, he is not bound to produce the record of that suit.

Case for speaking of the Plaintiff these words, "you swore to a lie to-day, in a case tried before *Josiah Tyson*, Esquire, against *Daniel McDonald*, for killing a dog, and you offered to swear to a lie before." On the trial before NORWOOD, Judge, the Plaintiff not being able to produce the warrant, on which the proceedings before *Tyson* were had, nor to account for its absence, the Judge directed a nonsuit, holding such proof to be a necessary part of the Plaintiff's case, whereupon the Plaintiff appealed.

TAYLOR, C. J.—If it were not necessary to state in the declaration, the warrant and proceedings before the magistrate, it could not be necessary to adduce upon the trial, any proofs of their existence. And when the words spoken in this case are considered in reference to their actionable quality, I think it will appear, that the law

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McDonald. v. Murchison.

requires no other proof to be made, than such as the Plaintiff offered.

To say of a person that he is forsworn, is not necessarily actionable, because the words do not imply that the Plaintiff had forsworn himself in a judicial proceeding, and that alone, will constitute the crime of perjury. In bringing an action for such words therefore, the Plaintiff must, by way of introduction or inducement, state in the declaration, that some proceeding took place, or that some fact existed, to which the Defendant alluded; and this inducement is material and traversable. It must be shewn by a colloquium, that the words import a criminal charge, otherwise they are not actionable. But where the words spoken can be understood in none other than a criminal sense, as where the Plaintiff is directly charged with a theft or a perjury, no extrinsic matter is necessary to be charged, nor consequently to be proved. These words do upon their face, directly import that the Plaintiff was guilty of a judicial perjury, inasmuch as a magistrate has, in the first instance, jurisdiction of indictable trespasses, for the purpose of examining the charge, and of either binding the accused to Court, or discharging him. The words used by the Defendant, have discharged the Plaintiff from the necessity of making the averments necessary to show that a judicial proceeding existed, and are certainly actionable, if spoken maliciously. In such a case, the *prima facia* presumption is, that every thing took place before a Court of competent jurisdiction, and if the fact be not so, it is incumbent on the Defendant to prove it.

The slander in its present shape, is calculated to injure the Plaintiff to the same extent, as if it had been shewn that the warrant was issued and returned, and that the magistrate had jurisdiction; for every one, hearing it, would put the construction upon it, that she had perjured herself in a judicial trial. For these reasons, I think the nonsuit was improperly awarded, and that there ought to be a new trial.

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HALL Judge.—When one person charges another with having been forsworn, such words are not actionable, unless it is also charged that the forswearing took place in some Judicial proceeding, before a tribunal legally constituted, having jurisdiction of it; in that case, the slander is complete, and the words are actionable, and it is not material whether any such Judicial proceeding ever took place or not. If there never had been any such Judicial proceeding, and the Defendant, in that particular, was guilty of a falsehood, he ought not to be in a better situation than if he had told the truth, which he certainly would be, if it was incumbent upon the Plaintiff to produce it, or be nonsuited. When the Plaintiff, in the present case, proved the words charged in the declaration, she made out her case, and was not bound to produce the proceeding before the Justice of the Peace. I therefore think the nonsuit should be set aside, and a new trial granted.

Ambrose Nelson
v.
Baird Evans.
} From Rockingham.

In slander, the Defendant may prove a general report of the truth of the words spoken, in mitigation of damages, but not in justification. A record of the conviction of the slave, (the master being notified, and defending him,) is not evidence against the master, unless the latter is charged as an accessory, and then only *ex necessitate*.

This was an action on the Case for verbal Slander. The words charged in the declaration to have been spoken were, that the Plaintiff had broken the Defendant's house and stolen his gun, or that he (the Plaintiff) had caused his negro slave to do it. The Defendant pleaded not guilty, and a justification.

On the trial, before DANIEL Judge, the Plaintiff having proved his Case, the Defendant's Counsel offered to shew, that, before the publication of the slander, a gen-

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Nelson v. Evans.

oral opinion and belief prevailed in the neighbourhood, that the Plaintiff had caused his negro slave to commit the offence attributed to him. This evidence was opposed; but the presiding Judge received it as proper for the consideration of the Jury, not to establish the justification, but to mitigate the damages.

The Defendant then offered to give in evidence, a record of the conviction of the negro slave, for breaking the house and stealing the gun, but the Judge rejected it. The Defendant then proved that his house was broken in the month of July, while his family was absent, and that in June preceding, the Plaintiff was seen near his house, and the witness was about to state circumstances tending to shew an illicit intercourse between the Plaintiff and the wife of the Defendant, when the Judge stopped the evidence, as irrelevant and improper.

Witnesses having stated a general opinion, that the Plaintiff had caused the gun to be taken, in order to prevent the Defendant from killing him, the Defendant's Counsel proposed to ask, if it was not a part of the general rumour, that the illicit connection above mentioned existed, and was the motive for taking the gun. The Judge refused to permit the question to be asked; and a verdict being found for the Plaintiff, and a new trial, on the ground of error in the Judge, being refused, and Judgment rendered for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Murphey appeared for the Plaintiff. The Cause was submitted.

HALL Judge.—I think the Judge was right in permitting the Defendant to prove the reports in the neighborhood, of Defendant's guilt, in mitigation of damages, but not in support of the plea of justification. (See the cases collected in *Norris's Peake* on this subject, 478.) The law considers the Defendant less guilty, but not justified, when reports are publicly circulated, imputing the charge complained of to the Plaintiff. I also think

the Judge was right in rejecting the record of the slave's conviction, as being irrelevant, unless it was proved that the slave committed the offence by the master's direction, or with his connivance. That conviction proved nothing of itself; it might, probably, have given rise to the reports before noticed, of which the Court suffered the Defendant to have the benefit, in mitigation of damages, but it was not authority for such reports, and of course could not be a justification.

The same remark may be made to the third objection to the Judge's charge. The illicit commerce between the Plaintiff and the wife of the Defendant, might have been the origin of the reports in circulation, of which the Defendant had been allowed the benefit, in mitigation of damages; but it could not be a justification of them, nor of the charge, made in this suit, against the Defendant.

HENDERSON Judge.—This case presents a question never agitated before in this country, so far as I know. In England, it could not arise, owing to circumstances peculiar to this country. The charge made by the Defendant is, that the Plaintiff had caused his, the Plaintiff's negro, to steal the Defendant's gun. The Defendant, after having the benefit of showing that such were the reports in the neighborhood, by way of mitigation of damages, offered in evidence a record of the conviction of the negro slave for stealing the gun, and notice to the Plaintiff, his master, to appear and defend him, and offered to show that he did appear and assist in his defence. This was rejected by the Judge, on the ground, that, if received, it could only go in mitigation of damages; and that he had already had the benefit of it, through the medium of the report.

I am disposed to concur with the Judge, but not for the reasons given by him: for *non constat*, the evidence offered, that the negro stole his gun, was believed. The

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Defendant might wish to show that the report was true in part, to wit, that the negro did steal the gun, and thereby strengthen the whole report, by shewing that part of it was true; and, if admissable at all, it might be received to prove a part of his justification, and the residue, to wit, that the Plaintiff caused the negro to steal the gun, he might prove by other testimony. I am disposed to think the law is so, although ruled otherwise by Judge Chase, on the trial of Callender. But, putting this out of the case, and the point, which might be raised, that it was *res inter alios acta*, I am inclined to think that it is inadmissible, because the conviction of the slave might have arisen from evidence wholly incompetent against the master, a free white man. If it should be admissible, it is making *that* evidence indirectly, which is not so directly, to wit, the testimony of negroes and mulattoes within the fourth degree. I am inclined to think, therefore, that the record ought not to have been received.

Should it be asked, if this record is inadmissible to prove the guilt of the negro, what is to be done with accessorial offences of white persons in such cases? It is answered, that if the record of the conviction is a *sine qua non* to the conviction of the principal, the record must be received. It is the best which the State can do; but independently of it, full proof of the principal fact must be made, and practice must yield to principle, for the *conviction* of the principal is not essential to the guilt of the accessory. The accessory *may* be guilty, although the principal is acquitted. The conviction of the principal is required as a shield for the accessory, upon the principle, that he who is charged with a crime, can best defend the charge, either by opposing proofs or matter of justification: And with that view, originally, I think it was introduced, for unquestionably it is *res inter alios acta*; but, in time, it became *prima facie* evidence of the principal's guilt. If something of this sort is not done,

no white person will be convicted of an accessorial crime, where a negro, mulatto or Indian, is the principal; for the Court, when the record is offered, cannot enquire into the evidence upon which the conviction was founded, and admit such records, where the evidence was such as is admissible against a white man, and reject them where it was not.

TAYLOR C. J. concurred.

Joab Alexander
v.
John B. Hutchinson. } From Iredell,

A promise, after arrival at full age, to pay a debt contracted during infancy, may be inferred; it is however an inference of fact, and is to be drawn only by the Jury.

An implied promise to pay a debt barred by the statute of limitations, is an inference of law.

Assumpsit for goods sold by the Plaintiff, as administrator of *William Hutchinson*. Plea infancy. Replication, that the Defendant promised after he came of age. On the trial, a witness, who had been the Guardian of the Defendant, proved that the Defendant, after he came of age, together with the other distributees of *Wm. Hutchinson*, and the Plaintiff, requested him to settle their accounts; that between the Plaintiff and Defendant a balance was struck in favor of the former, which was sought to be recovered in this action. The Defendant said he was not allowed all his credits, but was informed by the witness, that all had been allowed. The witness further said, that Defendant made no objections, neither admitting nor promising to pay the balance, and that the company separated in a friendly manner.

His honor Judge PAXTON, charged the Jury that, as a general rule, the Plaintiff was bound to prove an express promise, to entitle him to recover. But, from the opinion of one of the Judges of the Supreme Court

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in this case, if they believed the witness, they ought to give the Plaintiff a verdict.

The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff. A motion was made for a new trial for misdirection, which was overruled, and judgment rendered upon the verdict. Whereupon the Defendant appealed.

Wilson for the Defendant.

The case has before been reported—2 *Hawks*, 535.

TAYLOR Chief Justice, and HENDERSON Judge, delivered the opinion of the Court.

TAYLOR, C. J.—It should, I think, have been left to the Jury to determine whether they could infer, from the Defendant's behaviour, a clear and unequivocal assent to, and ratification of, the contract. Any act or conduct on his part, denoting a full assent of the mind, and leaving nothing to doubt or conjecture, without the utterance of any words, would be sufficient to warrant such an inference; otherwise a man without the faculty of speech, would be incapable of ratifying a contract.

In this case, the inference was drawn by the Court, that if the evidence was believed by the jury, the Plaintiff was entitled to a verdict, whereas the intent of the Defendant entered into the very essence of his conduct, and could alone give it any effective meaning, and this was a matter of fact to be judged of by the Jury. There must be a new trial.

HENDERSON, Judge.—When it is said, that an implied promise will take a case out of the statute of limitations, but that it requires an express promise, after full age, to bind a person to the performance of a contract, made during his minority;—all that is meant thereby is, that in the first case the *law* will make the promise, if there is an acknowledgment of a sufficient consideration; in the latter case, the *party* must make it *himself*: but the law has *prescribed* no *form* in which this promise shall be made; it may be by *words*, it may be by *signs* or *acts*;

any thing which shews an acquiescence, or an *assent* of the party's mind, is sufficient. The Judge, therefore, mistook the meaning of the Judge of the Supreme Court, to whose opinion he referred in his charge; at least he mistook the law in saying to the Jury, that if they believed the aforesaid facts, (referring to the testimony of the witness,) they should find for the Plaintiff. He should have told them, that if they believed the facts, and inferred therefrom that the Defendant promised to pay, that is, in the manner before stated, yielded or gave his assent to pay, then they should find for the Plaintiff; for very clearly, from the facts deposed to, it was an inference of *fact*, and *not* of *law*, whether he promised or did not promise. *He*, therefore, undertook to draw an inference of *fact*, when he gave these instructions.

The Judgment must be reversed, that the Jury may act understandingly on the subject.

Jonathan Stephenson
v.
Laban Jones. } From Cumberland.

If no error is assigned in the charge of the Judge, and none appears upon the record, the judgment of the Superior Court is of course affirmed.

This cause was bought up to this Court by certiorari, awarded on a rule made absolute, without notice to the Defendant, the Plaintiff swearing that he prayed an appeal to this Court, but that the Superior Court adjourned before he could get his sureties to the Court-House, for the purpose of giving bond. The affidavit set forth no special cause for which the appeal was prayed, and the record, which was in the usual form, stated, that after a verdict for the Defendant, before DONNELL, Judge, the Plaintiff obtained a rule for a new trial "on the ground that the verdict was against law and evidence," which rule was discharged.

Gaston, for the Plaintiff.

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PER CURIAM.—From an inspection of the record in this case, nothing appears shewing that judgment was improperly rendered against the Plaintiff in the Superior Court. That Judgment must therefore be affirmed.

John B. Earle
v.
William Dickson & Charles M'Dowell, adm'rs of Charles M'Dowell, dec'd. } From Burke.

A residence in another state, is not a residence *beyond seas* within the saving of the act of limitations.

Where one covenants for himself, without mentioning his heirs, to convey land on a certain event, and dies before that event happens, his administrators are not liable; and it seems that the only remedy is against his heir in Equity.

Assumpsit upon a written contract, dated in the year 1803, to convey three hundred acres of land on the Mississippi; "the titles to be made as soon as the Indian claim to said land, shall be extinguished."

The declaration contained an averment that the Defendant's intestate *died before the Indian claim was extinguished*, and the breach assigned was, "that the Defendant's had not made to the Plaintiff a title to the land." Pleas non assumpsit, and the statute of limitations. To the latter, replication, "that the Plaintiff was, and had ever been a citizen and inhabitant of the State of South Carolina, and had not been, at any time, from the 1st of January, 1818, to the commencement of this suit, within the State of North-Carolina." It was admitted that the Indian title to the land was extinguished in the year 1819. There was a general demurrer to the replication, which was overruled by his honor Judge RUFFIN; a verdict was found for the Plaintiff, upon the plea of non assumpsit, and judgment rendered accordingly, from which the Defendants appealed.

Badger, for the Defendants.

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HALL, Judge.—A principal question in this case arises upon the construction of the ninth section of the act of 1715, (*Rev. ch.* 2,) which gives further time to Plaintiffs beyond seas, to bring their actions, provided they do so within a certain time after their return, and that question is, whether the words *beyond seas*, mean that Plaintiffs *not beyond seas*, but without the limits of the State, are within the saving; if that meaning is given to them, it is not because that is their natural import, they certainly have another meaning, to-wit, what they plainly express, 1 *W. Bl. Rep.* 286, and so the Court thought in *Ward* v. *Hallam*, 2. *Dall.* 217. In that case, the Plaintiff was a citizen and resident of South-Carolina, and it was held, that he was *not beyond seas*, consequently not within the saving of the statute of limitations. See also *Kirby's Rep.* 299. In Maryland, it seems to have been ruled otherwise, 1 *Harris & M'Hen. Rep.* 89, and also in the Supreme Court of the United States, 3 *Wheaton*, 541.

Our act of limitation, was passed in the year 1715, the first year (as we learn from our statute book) of our colonial legislation. The territory then inhabited, and the number of colonists, were very limited; we were rather an adjunct to Virginia, than a distinct colony; we had little or no intercourse with any country, except Great-Britain. It is most probable, in this state of things, that the saving in favor of Plaintiffs, was inserted in favor of British creditors, and not in favor of creditors who were only separated from their debtors by colonial limits.

If this was originally the fact when the act passed; if the saving was intended, as is expressed, only for British creditors and others, really and literally *beyond seas*, shall we now give it a quite different and opposite construction, and allege, as a reason, that the state of things is much altered since the enactment of the law, or shall we not rather wait, until it is the pleasure of the Legislature to make the alteration, as has been done in Massachusetts, 3 *Mass. Rep.* 271, and in New-York, 3 *Johnson's Rep.* 263.

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This question came before the six Judges of this state, in the year 1811, 2 *Murph. Rep.* 23. They held, that the saving in the statute of limitations, as to Plaintiffs beyond seas, did not extend to persons resident in other states of the union. They considered that it would be mischievous, that citizens of other states, particularly adjoining ones, with whom we have the greatest intercourse, should be permitted, at any remote period, to bring suits against the citizens of this State.

It does not appear, from an examination of the contract sued upon, that there has been any breach of it.—The Defendant's intestate, died before the Indian title became extinct, in the year 1819, he therefore was prevented from a compliance by the act of God. *Gwillam's Bacon, Condition q.* 1 *Co. Lit.* 218.

Nothing can be charged against the Defendants. On this point, however, it is unnecessary to give an opinion.

I am of opinion, that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute.

Henderson Judge—*M'Dowell*, by a written contract, bound himself to convey certain lands to the Plaintiff, (describing them) when the Indian title thereto should be extinguished. *M'Dowell* died before the Indian title was extinguished; and this action is brought against his executors, for a breach of the agreement. All these facts appear upon the face of the declaration.

I am at a loss to see wherein this contract has been violated, either by *McDowell* in his life time, or by his executors since his death.

When a person contracts to do, what Lord *Coke* calls a local act, by which I understand, an act that requires the concurrence of another, he has time during life, to perform it, unless hastened by request, but he must do it at his peril during life, (that is even without request) if he does not, his contract is violated; if however, he has a specified time to do it in, and he dies before the expiration of that time, the contract is not violated, for the

act of God injures no man. Therefore, *Coke* advises that his heirs be bound. (*Coke. Litt.* 216, *a.*)

But it is otherwise, as to what he calls transitory acts, such as do not require the agency of the other party, as the payment of money, or the like. If no time be specified, he shall do it presently in some cases, in others at a convenient time, and that without request. Where a time is fixed, and the person making the engagement dies before that time, it shall be done by his executors; for these acts may as well be done by the executors as the party, and the obligations devolve on the executors, whether named or not, but it is not so as to heirs; the obligation does not devolve on them, unless bound by their ancestor, nor is the ancestor or his executors bound for their acts, unless he binds himself for them, as in the case recommended by *Coke*, before cited; that is, when he covenants, that he or his heirs shall do a local act, within a specified time, and he dies within the time, his executors are then bound that the heir shall do it. But this case is much stronger than where a person binds himself to do a local act, within a specified time, where even he is excused by death. For here he binds himself to do an act, after another act is done, over which he has no control, and he dies before this other act is done. It cannot therefore be pretended, that *McDowell* violated his agreement in his life-time, or that his administrators have since his death, for they have no estate to convey, and it was never designed, that they should make the estate. If the testator had bound himself, without limitation of time, and died without performance, his wrong would have been thrown upon his estate. But here, I cannot perceive that any wrong has been done by any one. In this case, I think that the lands in question descended to the heirs at law, burthened with the Plaintiff's equity, and in this view of the case, complete justice will be done. The personal representatives have done no wrong, and the personal estate is the proper fund, in the first instance,

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to make compensation for the wrongs of the owner, whether founded on tort or on a breach of contract. If this action was sustained, those entitled to the personal estate might be disappointed, when the only wrong, if any, has been committed by the heir, in not performing the trust.

The judgment for the Plaintiff should be reversed, and the judgment on the record arrested; but as there is a motion for a new trial on another ground, I am content to reverse the judgment, a new trial will follow of course, on the other ground. I concur with Judge HALL, in his construction of the saving in our statute of limitations.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, concurred.

William Fagán v. Arthur Newson. } From Davidson.

Damages cannot be recovered for the loss of a good bargain. An action will not lie for a deceit in an executory contract, respecting the sale of lands.

Whether an action will lie for a deceit in the false affirmation of title to lands—Qu.?

Case for a deceit in the sale of land. The Defendant carried the Plaintiff upon the land, and shewed him a bottom containing about two acres, which he represented as a part of the land: a bargain was made, and the Plaintiff paid the purchase-money. The Defendant tendered the Plaintiff a deed, which did not include the bottom, and which the latter refused.

It appeared that the Plaintiff knew he had no title to the bottom, and that it was the property of, and in the possession of another.

His honor Judge DANIEL charged the Jury, that if the Defendant made a false representation of the boundaries of his land, knowing it to be false, and the Plaintiff had parted with his money, relying upon such

false repsesentations, he was entitled to recover in this action. The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff; a rule was obtained to shew cause why a new trial should not be granted, which being discharged, Judgment was rendered upon the verdict, from which the Defendant appealed.

Nash and *Murphey* for the Defendant.—1st. The Plaintiff, as far as he was able, put an end to the contract by refusing to accept a deed, and cannot now bring an action for a deceit in an executory contract, nor can he maintain an action for the loss of a good bargain.

2d. In personals, when the vendor is out of possession, *caveat emptor* is the rule; when, however, he is in possession, a warranty of title is implied, because title is presumed to follow the possession. But title to lands does not pass by possession, and therefore deceit will not lie for a false affirmation as to their title. *Roswell* v. *Vaughan, Cro. J.* 196. *Lysney* v. *Selby, 2d Ray.* 1118. 1. *Salk,* 211. 3. *D. & E.* 51.

Badger, for the Plaintiff.

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—It is a rule readily deducible from the authorities, that the Plaintiff cannot recover in an action of deceit, unless he prove, not only that a fraud has been committed by the Defendant, but also, that it has occasioned a loss and damage to the Plaintiff. He must have been deprived, by fraudulent means, of some benefit or advantage, that the law gave him a right to demand.

But it is by no means a necessary consequence of the establishment of both propositions, that the Plaintiff is entitled to recover in this action; for a question of law still arises upon the facts, whether the deceitful means employed, were, in themselves, calculated to impose upon a person exercising the ordinary prudence and circumspection, which men usually bring to the management of their affairs.

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Truth and good faith ought to characterise every contract between men; and there can be but one opinion relative to the immorality of asserting ownership in property, with a knowledge of its falsehood, with a view to induce another to make a purchase. Yet there are many violations of the moral law, for which no compensation can be given in a court of justice; some injurious consequence, some actual loss to the party confiding, must be presented in a tangible form; and the misrepresentation must be of a kind, the falsehood of which was not readily open to the detection of the other party.

Now it appears to me, that the conduct of the Defendant was not calculated to impose on any one of common prudence: he pointed out these two acres of low ground as belonging to the tract he wished to sell, but they were, at the very time, the property and in the possession, of another person. It might be supposed, that this circumstance alone would be sufficient to awaken the Plaintiff's suspicion, and incite him to examine, or procure to be examined, the registry books. It is a very reasonable principle, that the purchaser should not be entitled to an action of deceit, if he may readily inform himself, as to the truth of the facts, which are misrepresented.—Accordingly, we find that, if the seller of a house affirm that the rent was more than it really is, whereby the purchaser was induced to give more for it than it was worth, an action will lie; for the value of the rent is within the private knowledge of the landlord and the tenant, and they may collude to deceive the purchaser. But if the seller affirm, that the thing sold is worth so much, or that one would have given so much for it, although the affirmation be false, yet if the buyer might inform himself as to the value, no action lies. 1 *Salk.* 211. 2 *Ld. Ray.* 1118.

And in this case, though the assertion was false, and made with a view to induce the Plaintiff to buy the land, yet he might easily have informed himself as to the state

of the title. It is laid down in another case, that if one should sell lands, wherein another is in possession, or a horse whereof another is possessed, without covenant or warranty for the enjoyment, it is at the peril of him who buys, and no reason he should have an action by the law, where he did not provide for himself. (2 *Cro.* 196.) So if a purchaser neglect to look into the title, it will be considered as his own folly, and he can have no relief. *Sugden*, 347.

2dly. No damage has resulted to the Plaintiff from the fraudulent misrepresentation of the Defendant; though the Plaintiff paid the purchase-money in the expectation of having the two acres, as part of the tract; yet when he discovered that the spring branch formed the southern boundary, he elected not to accept the deed, as he had a right to do, and thereby became entitled to recover back the purchase-money. The receipt of this with interest, would place the parties in *statu quo*, and complete the justice of the case. If damages were awarded in this case, they would be given for a bare naked falsehood; the detection of which, before the consummation of the bargain, prevented any ill consequence to the Plaintiff, who has not been deceived in the sale, though he may have lost a bargain.

I think there ought to be a new trial.

HALL, Judge.—I concur in the opinion that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute, as the Plaintiff alleges the Defendant could not comply with his contract; he also, in case the fact is so, is absolved from a compliance, or if he has paid the purchase-money, he may treat the contract as a nullity, and recover that money and interest back; but he cannot recover damages for the loss of a good bargain. The Plaintiff states that he refused to receive a deed for part of the land, of course he has done nothing to prevent him from recovering back the purchase-money.

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HENDERSON, Judge.—Strictly speaking, the injury charged in this declaration is, that the parties being in contract for the sale of a tract of land, the Defendant affirmed that certain lands were his, and a part of those they were contracting for, well knowing that they were not, and the Plaintiff, being an unlettered man, and believing the false representations of the Defendant, contracted with him for the purchase of the whole tract, and paid him therefor, the sum of three hundred dollars, and this action is not brought to recover back the money paid, as upon a consideration which has failed; thereby disaffirming the contract, but for a deceitful representation in making it, thereby affirming its continuance: It is therefore in truth, an action brought for the loss of a good bargain, which I believe it is well settled cannot be sustained. *Flureau* v. *Thornhill*, *Blk. Rep.* 1078.

The injury really sustained is, that the Defendant cannot or will not perform his contract, which gives an action upon the contract, not an action in deceit for an imposition. If the Defendant had imposed the property, that is, had passed the estate under this deception, (other things out of the way,) an action might be supported; but no estate has yet passed, at least for the two acres. The only injury which the Plaintiff has sustained is, either the loss of a good bargain, the breach of contract, to be compensated in damages, or the loss of the money which he has paid; if he has suffered any other, I am unable to perceive it; neither of which can be redressed in such an action as this. The case made in this declaration, only resembles the first, which gives no cause of action. If the Plaintiff still insists on his contract, an action is open to him: if he wishes his money back, he can recover it in an action for money had and received. As to damages, which the Plaintiff has sustained by paying his money, the restoration of the same sum with interest, is in law a compensation.

Judgment reversed, new trial.

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Josiah Turner
v.
Samuel Child. } From Orange.

An intermeddling for which there is a *colourable* right, will not make a wrongful executorship.

Where A sold the property of B, as his agent, and *after the death of B*, collected the proceeds: this does not make him an *executor de son tort*.

Where there is an administration, acts for which the agent is responsible *to the administrator*, will not make him an *executor de son tort*.

Assumpsit for goods sold, charging the Defendant as executor in his own wrong, of *Francis Child*. On the trial, it appeared, that *Francis Child* removed from this state, leaving the Defendant his agent, who on the 3d of January 1823, sold the property of *Francis*, upon a credit of six months. *Francis Child* died on the 16th January 1823, and after the expiration of the credit, the notes taken at the sale, were collected by the Defendant; it also appeared, that there was an administrator of *Francis Child*, duly appointed.

His honor Judge DANIEL, charged the Jury, that by the death of *Francis*, the agency of the Defendant was revoked, and the collection by him, of money belonging to the estate of *Francis*, was an intermeddling, which made him liable to creditors.

The jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, a rule for a new trial being discharged, and judgment rendered for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Badger, for the Plaintiff.

Nash, for the Defendant. The cause was submitted.

HENDERSON, Judge, delivered the opinion of a majority of the Court:

I am of opinion that the collection by the Defendant, after the death of his principal, of debts due on

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sales made by him, as agent, in his principal's lifetime, does not make him an executor of his own wrong. The collection of the money, has a reference to the agency, and must be considered as the completion of an act, proper and lawful in its commencement, and it does not depend on the strict qustion of right, whether the agent had an authority to make the collection; a colourable one will do, by which a character is given to the transaction, showing that it was not done as an executor, or as one performing the will of the deceased. 1 *Esp. Rep.* 335. But I am rather disposed to think, that the receipt of this money, is not only colourably right, but actually so, and that a payment made by the purchaser, without directions to the contrary, is a discharge from the debt, and if so, it is not an officious intermeddling; for it would be strange, if an act for which an authority exists, will make a person executor of his own wrong. A sense of duty, very probably, induced the collection of the money. The sale was made by the Defendant, and he might hold himself bound to omit no reasonable exertion, that the proceeds should be forthcoming to the rightful owner, when he should be called on, for an account of his agency. It is entirely unlike the case of *Padget* v. *Priest & Porter*, 2 *D. & E.* 97, where the sale was made after the principal's death, at which time, the authority ceased. If the debt arising from the sale, had depended on the contract of sale only, it is not to be questioned, but that the rightful administrator could have recovered on the contract; but if the agent had taken a bond or note, payable to himself, I cannot see how the administrator, or any other person but the Defendant, could have enforced payment; and if so, there cannot be the least pretence of charging him as an executor of his own wrong.

It appears also, that there is an administrator, of course no act, for which the Defendant is responsible to the administrator, can make him an executor of his own wrong.

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For where administration has been taken, those acts only which subject the agent, not to the action of the rightful administrator, but which interfere with the estate *quoad* creditors, render him liable, as an executor of his own wrong, as if he takes possession, or even has possession, of goods under a fraudulent gift from the deceased, this makes him executor *de son tort*; for it does not subject him to the action of the rightful administrator, the gift being good as to the intestate, is good as to the administrator also, but it is void as to creditors.

TAYLOR, C. J.—This case having been submitted without argument, and presenting one question of some difficulty, and of no ordinary occurrence, I have examined the authorities with the view of ascertaining the principle, which ought to govern the decision.

The principal question is, whether the Defendant, having collected debts due to *Francis Child*, after the death of the latter, though incurred for property sold, during his life-time, by the Defendant duly authorised for that purpose, will amount to such an intermeddling, as will make the Defendant executor of his own wrong.

I take it for granted, that the sale being made in the life-time of *Francis*, was properly made, under an authority from him; but the cases have satisfied my mind, that upon the death of *Francis*, all further power conferred by the agency was at an end, for a power to represent another, can only continue as long as there is some one to be represented. Therefore a letter of attorney to deliver seisin after the *death of the feoffor* is void, because upon his death, the lands descend to his heir, *C. Litt.* 52, *b.* and for a similar reason, a power to collect debts after the death of the principal, supposing it to have been expressly granted, which it was not in this case, must be void; because the right to collect the debts, devolves upon the executor, or administrator. In like manner the payment of a sailor's wages, to a person hav-

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ing a power of attorney to receive them, has been held void, where the principal was dead at the time of payment, 5 *Espin.* 118. And what appears to me to be a strong case, going far beyond the one under consideration; it has been held that a power of attorney given to a creditor, authorizing him to receive a debt, without any actual appropriation or assignment of it, is void after the death of the debtor, although the latter declared at the time, that it was given with the view to enable the creditor to apply the money received towards the liquidation of his own debt. 2 *Ves. & Beam.* 51.

It appears to me that if any case can decisively show the inflexible quality of the rule of law, that all authority ceases at the death of the principal, this case does show it; for if it cannot be relaxed in favor of a creditor whom the debtor was desirous to secure, and, to secure whom, he did every thing short of an actual assignment of his demand, ought it to be relaxed in favor of one who is not a creditor? of one who, when he collected the money, did not apply it to the payment of *Francis Child's* debts, or as it appears from the case, had an intention to do so? So if the power be coupled with an interest, it is instantly revoked by the death of the grantor, and an act done under it afterwards, though *bona fide*, and before notice of the death of the grantor, is a nullity. 4 *Campb.* 272. And the case in 2 *Term Rep.* 97, incontestably shows, that if a man receive the money of the intestate after his decease, though it was received according to an order in his lifetime, it will make him an executor *de son tort.* If it be an express power to sell and collect money, it is revoked by the death of the grantor; *a fortiori* must it be, where the power to collect is only incidental, and implied from the power of selling. From the view of the authorities, it results, that the Defendant has collected the debts of the deceased without legal authority, and I think, without the color of it; and in so doing, has announced to the creditors, that he has taken upon himself, the burthen of adminis-

tration; he has made this announcement by such acts as are the usual and ordinary indications to creditors, against whom they are to bring their actions. The law says that slight circumstances of intermeddling, are sufficient for the purpose of charging a man as executor of his own wrong. The cases put by way of illustrating this rule, are the slightest imaginable, and such as can lessen the value of the estate, or affect the interest of the creditors, but in the most inconsiderable degree. But collecting the debts due the deceased, without paying the creditors, is not only sweeping away the fund which the law has appropriated to them, but is, also, the least equivocal act a man can do, who desires to be considered as administering; an act too, of which there can seldom be any difficulty of proof.

I lay no stress upon the circumstance that the extent of the power to the Defendant was not shewn, or whether he was authorised to sell upon credit; because upon the assumption that the power of attorney, was as broad as a skilful conveyancer could make it, yet nothing that I can perceive in the case, will avert the consequence, that the debts due for the things sold, whether by specialty or single contract, became, *ipso facto*, on the death of *Francis Child*, the property of his rightful administrator.

In my opinion, there was no error in the charge of the Court, and I am in favor of affirming the Judgment.

Judgment reversed, and new trial granted.

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Robert D. Frost et. ux. v. Josiah Etheridge. } From Currituck.

A widow is dowable of lands sold after the death of the husband, under a *fi. fa.* tested before.

An agreement to sell lands, in equity, bars the wife's dower.

Petition for dower. The only question presented to the Court, was that decided in *Hodges* v. *M'Cabe*, (3 *Hawks*, 78) viz. whether the wife is dowable of lands sold after the husband's death, under an execution tested and levied before.

The case was argued at June Term, 1825, by *Leonard Martin* for the Petitioner, and *Gaston* for the Defendant. No note of this argument is in the possession of the Reporters.

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—The question presented by the record is, whether the levy of a *Fieri Facias* upon land, of which a person is in possession, under a title not controverted, shall so operate, as to deprive his widow of dower, although the sale is made after the death of the husband?

The act of Assembly entitles the widow to be endowed of all the lands, of which her husband died seised, or possessed; but the latter term being ambiguous, and not necessary to be defined in the decision of this question, the enquiry may be more directly pursued, by considering, whether the title of the owner is evicted, by the levy of the execution? I cannot conceive upon what principle, so important an effect can be attributed to the levy of a *fi. fa.* when it is the received, and established law, that it does not change the possession; for the sheriff cannot turn the Defendant out of possession by force of the levy; nor can he after a sale and deed, deliver the

actual possession to the purchaser; he can only deliver the legal possession; and if the Defendant will not voluntarily relinquish it, the purchaser must resort to an ejectment. To invest the sheriff by implication, with the power to turn the Defendant, and his family, out of doors, by virtue of a levy, seems to be as unfounded in principle, as it would be oppressive in practice. Dec. 1826. Frost et ux v. Etheridges

For how can we suppose a disseisin to be effected by the levy, without assuming a seisin in some other person? In whom shall it be considered, in contemplation of law? Not in the sheriff, for he has not the *scintilla* of right; not even so much, as to enable him to bring an action of trespass against one, who entered on the land after the levy: the right of ownership could be asserted only by the Defendant. The writ does not authorise the sheriff to break open the dwelling-house, to seize even the goods of the Defendant, for this sanctuary, of the man and his family, cannot be violated. 2 *Show.* 87. Much less does it permit him to break open the house, for the purpose of possessing himself of the land. Not in the Plaintiff in the judgment; for even in goods seised, he has neither interest, property, or possession, by force of the levy, and can maintain no action against a trespasser who takes them away, his only remedy being against the sheriff. The Plaintiff's right, both in chattels and land, is confined to the money which may be raised on the sale of them;—to the lien from the teste of the execution, so as to entitle him to a priority if he sells under it; and to bind the property, of whatever nature, as against the party Defendant himself, and all claiming by assignment from, or representation through, or under him.

There is then no person in whom the seising can vest, if it is divested from the Defendant; nor can it be considered as in custody of the law, and in abeyance. Against the freehold's being in abeyance, the policy of the law, both ancient and modern, whether derived from the

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feudal system, or from a principle directly adverse to the genius of that institution, viz. to facilitate the alienation of land,—hath placed insuperable bars. It is an established rule, that the freehold cannot be in abeyance, although with respect to the inheritance, it is sometimes admitted from necessity. But it cannot be done by the act of the party, and, for this reason a freehold particular estate, is necessary to support a remainder of the same degree. *Ibb.* 153. The fee can be in abeyance only to the intent, that another, previously designated, may have it afterwards. As in the case of a lease for life, the remainder to the right heirs of the body of A, who is alive, there the entail shall be in abeyance until the death of A, and then it shall vest in his issue, because it could not vest before; and to the purpose of vesting afterwards, it shall be in abeyance. But to make that to pass out of one, which shall never vest in another, is altogether incompatible with the design of the law, in allowing things to be in abeyance. *Plowden* 556. It is, besides, in direct conflict with the cautious policy of our law, in the solemn forms it prescribes, for the transmutation of freehold estates, to invest one of the slightest, and most undefined acts, a ministerial officer can perform, with the tremendous effect of divesting the freehold right of a man in possession. I cannot give my sanction to the principle, that the sheriff's endorsement of half a dozen words upon an execution, shall be allowed to cut up by the roots, the debtor's right to his freehold; nor to ascribe to that officer, a plenitude of authority, over the property of the citizens, which is unknown to the constitution, and the laws, in any other instance; and is, in all respects, adverse to the spirit of our institutions.

The language is intelligible, (or if we doubt, our books will furnish the necessary information,) when we are told, that a man may be deprived of his freehold by his

own solemn act, executed in his life-time;—by a disseisin and a descent cast;—by an adverse possession, under a colour of title, for seven years;—by the verdict of a jury, disaffirming his title in a suit brought to try it—or by a sheriff's deed, in pursuance of an execution; but I know of no case, adjudging, after argument, that a levy of an execution is another mean of divesting the seisin.

When we examine the reasons, wherefore the law considers chattel property to be vested in the sheriff to a certain degree, by the levy of a *fi. fa.* it will be seen, that they bear no application to freehold estates, and consequently cannot produce similar effects. Although the statute of 5 *Geo.* 2, which first made land in the colonies liable to be sold for the payment of debts, enacts "that they shall be liable in like manner as personal estates are seised, extended, sold or disposed of absolutely, so as to pass the whole interest of the debtor to the purchaser;" yet laws must be construed in accordance with the rules, and principles, growing out of the existing, and unalterable, nature of things.

When personal chattels are levied upon by the sheriff, under an execution, the debtor is discharged to the amount of their value, for which the sheriff is accountable to the judgment creditor; nor does any claim exist against the Defendant, although the sheriff waste the goods, or fail to return the execution. The debtor has lost the special property of the goods, which the sheriff may, at once, take into his possession, as well to render the levy effectual, as to secure himself against the claims of the creditor. And by virtue of the special property thus acquired, the law arms the sheriff with authority to maintain trover, or trespass, against a wrong doer, that he may be enabled to meet his responsibility to the creditor.

But in relation to lands, they will be more safely kept in the Defendant's possession, than in that of the sheriff: they cannot be secreted, rescued, or removed: the debtor

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cannot by any act of his, transfer the title, discharged of the lien arising from the *teste* of the execution; nor will so much of his debt as the land is worth, be discharged by the levy, for the sheriff has no power to protect it from aggression, nor is he responsible to the creditor.

Chattels are transferable at common law, by delivery; they may be taken away into the sheriff's custody, the moment he makes the levy; and if they are expensive in keeping, the law has made sundry provisions for the indemnification of the sheriff. But, conventional estates of freehold can pass only by deed; and it is difficult to understand, how, in the language of the statute of *Geo. 2*, lands "can be seised in like manner with personal estates;" and not less so to perceive, how, consistently with our act of 1715, *c. 7*, the debtor became disseised by the levy; for it is a rule of the common law, that where seisin of an inheritance is once alleged, it shall always be intended to continue till the contrary be shewn. *Sir T. Jones*, 182, *Cockman* v. *Farrer*. Seisin is also favoured in equity. *Gro. & Rudim. of Law and Equity*, 66, *rule* 96.

These views of the subject induce me to believe, that the levy on the land has, *per se*, no other operation than to fix upon that particular tract, as the subject, from which, the sum claimed in the execution, is to be raised; that, the security of the creditor is founded on the *teste* of the execution, and derives no aid from the levy; and that even the benefit of this, may be lost by the sale of the land, under an execution of a posterior *teste*, as was admitted by this Court in the case of *Green* v. *Johnson*, 3 *Hawks*, 309.

It is urged on the part of the Defendant, that the sale of the land, after the death of the debtor, has relation to the levy or *teste*, and, thus, evicts the seisin out of him from that time, and that, consequently, he did not die seised. There are some general rules touching the doctrine of relation, which it may be useful to examine in

the first place. It is a fiction of law, intended to subserve the ends of justice, and will not be tolerated where it tends to injustice; nor will it apply in any case, except between the same parties, and for the same ends; but it shall never work a wrong to strangers, or defeat collateral acts, which are lawful. 13 *Co.* 21. The same author in his *3d Rep.* 29, states it as a general rule, that relations shall extend only between the same parties, and shall never be strained to the prejudice of a third person who is not party, or privy, to the act. I shall presently state the reasons why this appears to me, to apply exactly to the widow's claim, and that she was neither party, nor privy, to the act, which is set up to defeat her dower.

I will select a few of the illustrations of this general rule. Where a person is disseised, the disseisee, after re-entry, can maintain trespass against the disseisor; for the law as to the disseisor and his servants will suppose the freehold to have continued in the disseisee; but not so with respect to strangers who come in by right or title under the disseisor; they cannot be made trespassers by relation. *Lifford's case*, 11 *Co.* 51.

Before the enabling statute, the grant of a Bishop was not good beyond his own life, without confirmation of his chapter; and if the confirmation was not till after his death, it came too late, and the successor was not bound. *Fitzh. Abr. Tit. confirmation, Pl.* 22. Entry by feoffee on livery within the view is too late, if postponed till after the death of the feoffor. *Godb.* 25. Livery of seisin, which is necessary to consummate the conveyance by feoffment, cannot be made effectually after the death of the feoffer. *Litt. sect.* 66; for, says *Littleton*, "after the decease of him who made the deed, the right of these tenements is forthwith in his heir, or in some other."—This reason is applicable to this case; for it shows that in *Littleton's* opinion, a conveyance to be effectual, must be consummate in the life of the grantor, and that the

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consummation comes too late, when the estate is vested in a third person. So while attornment was necessary to the perfection of a grant, if it was not made in the life-time of the grantor, the grant was void; and this doctrine of *Littleton, sec.* 551, is confirmed by Lord *Coke* in his comment, who states the reason to be, that every grant must take effect as to the substance of it, in the life both of grantor and grantee. So in an exchange made according to the forms of the common law, to perfect which, entry is essential, if either party dies before, it cannot be made effectually afterwards. *Co. Litt.* 52 *b.*

If the sale relates to the levy, I have stated the reasons which satisfy me, that in the case of land levied upon, it relates to an act of very little consequence or legal operation. If it relates to the *teste*, it connects itself with an act, the only effect of which is to give the creditor a contingent priority to raise his money from the property levied upon; and to invalidate any transfers made by the debtor after that period. But neither act impairs, or subverts, the debtors seisin, for before his death he was a freeholder, to all the intents, and purposes, for which that qualification is required by our law.

But I know of no case where relation is relied on, to aid by its fiction, an act of the party in destruction of a title conferred by law; and the rule is expressly stated in 3 *Co.* 29, "that though relations aid acts in law, *as Dower*, yet they will never aid the acts of the parties, that is to say, to make void acts of the parties good, by fiction or relation of law;" and hence, thinking the sale of this land was a void act as to the widow, whose title to dower was complete by the death of the husband, it cannot be made good by relation to the levy, or *teste*.— The cases of bankrupt too cited at the bar, show that the title of the assignees shall not be overreached by the relation of an execution, because the title is conferred by law.

Before the act of 1784, *c.* 204, *sec.* 8, the widow was dowable of all the lands of which her husband was seised

in deed or in law during the coverture; and upon the assignment of dower she held, it discharged from all judgments, leases, mortgages, or other incumbrances, made or created by her husband after the marriage; and the reason given is, because, upon the husband's death, the title of the wife being consummate, has relation back to the time of the marriage, and to the seisin which her husband then had, both of which precede such incumbrances, *Co. Litt.* 46 *a.* 4 *Rep.* 65 *a.* Our act has limited the right of dower, to such lands as her husband died seised of; but these are to be assigned to her, in as full right, as if the rest which she had aliened, had not been stript from her dowry. As to what is left to her, she should be entitled to them in *pleno jure;* and I can see no reason why she should not be entitled to the benefit of the relation, in a degree at least corresponding to the curtailed nature of her claim. Then, as to the land of which her husband died seised, his death having consummated her right of dower in them, *that* should have relation back to the time of marriage, and to that period of her husband's seisin, which preceded any incumbrance short of an actual disseisin, or transfer of the title. This construction would place her with regard to this tract of land, in the situation in which the act found her, with respect to all the land, of which her husband was seised during the coverture. This is a relation in maintainance of right and justice, founded in reality and not in fiction, *Hob.* 222, and overreaches in its operation the *teste* and levy of the execution.

We have the warrant of the law for giving the widow's claim a liberal construction, for it is transmitted to us, as a maxim, that the law favoureth three things, life, liberty and dower, *Bac. on uses;* and modern writers have shewn that the legal right is founded on a moral obligation on the part of the husband, to provide for his wife not only during coverture, but after his death; because, during coverture, she can acquire no property

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of her own, and what she has at the marriage belongs to her husband either absolutely or during the coverture, 2 *P. Wms.* 702.

As to the wife being bound by the relation of the execution, because she is privy in estate, that is answered by the act of 1791 *c.* 351, which prefers her claim to that of the creditors; for although after the assignment of dower she is *in* from her husband and not from the heir, to whom her claim is paramount, yet the husbands estate continues in her, discharged of his debts, and all other incumbrances provided he died seised. When it is ascertained that she has the right of dower, that right must devolve upon her, both by the common law, and our act of Assembly, pure and untrammelled. The Plaintiff in the judgment cannot be viewed in any other light than as a creditor; his lien on the land is absorbed by an anterior right so far as it respects the widow, and it remains on that portion of the land only which descended upon the heir.

Whilst I acquiesce in the wisdom of that policy which removed the restraints upon the alienation of real estates, it must be allowed that a very helpless part of the community has been made to sacrifice in an undue proportion towards its establishment; and, this is, perhaps, a reason why the pittance that remains to the widow should be protected from reasonings and analogies, which have indeed a salutary reference to chattels personal, but the application of which, to real property, is not so distinct, and palpable. It might naturally have been expected, that difficulties would arise from the application of a species of process to lands, which has been introduced, and used for centuries, solely for the seizing and disposition of chattels, in relation to every step of which, rules and principles have been established by a series of adjudications. I venture to think, that much of our difficulty here, has proceeded from an indiscriminate adoption of these decisions, without marking the inherent and fun-

damental difference between the two species of property. Upon the whole case my opinion is, that the widow is entitled to dower.

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HENDERSON, Judge.—A levy made on lands under a *fieri facias*, (if it can be called a levy,) does not divest even the possession of the Defendant, much less does it vest his estate in the sheriff: and he who purchases at a sheriff's sale, comes to the estate under the Defendant, and not under the sheriff. The sheriff is no more than an *agent* constituted by law to transfer the Defendant's estate to the purchaser; his transfer does not interfere with the rights of others; he can only convey the estate which the Defendant had, at the time of the transfer, with a relation to the *teste* of the execution in certain cases, for reasons peculiar to such cases: in the case of the heir, because he is a mere volunteer and comes to the estate in representation of the debtor; in the case of a purchaser from the Defendant, because it is a presumption of law, that such purchase was fraudulent as to the execution creditor, and, if so, it is the estate of the Defendant as to such creditor, and the purchaser at his execution sale succeeds to his right. But there is no relation as to the wife; she claims the estate not as representing the husband, but in her own right, and as a purchaser by the operation of law, and to her acquisition no fraud can be imputed. It is supposed, because the purchaser at the execution sale, can defeat him who purchases from the husband after the *teste*, and the latter can defeat the widow, where the husband dies after the *teste*,—that the purchaser at the execution sale, has a title preferable to that of the widow; and so it would be, if the wife's estate could be impeached on the ground of fraud; that is, if it was presumption of law, that the death of the husband was designed to defeat the execution, as it is the presumption that a sale or transfer made by a debtor after the *teste* of the execution was so de-

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signed. In the contest, therefore, between the purchaser at the sale under execution, and the purchaser from the Defendant, the title of the latter is impugned on the ground of fraud, which cannot be urged against the widow's title. But in the contest between the widow and the purchaser from the husband, the widow, *not claiming under the execution*, cannot impute fraud to the purchaser from the husband; for this presumption of fraud extends only to the protection of those who claim under the execution.

It is admitted, that if it be shewn that A is superior to B, and that B is superior to C, it is thereby shewn, that A is superior to C. But it is denied, that if it be shewn that A is superior to B in *strength*, and that B is superior to C in *skill*, it is thereby shewn that A is superior to C in either.

There is a clear application of these principles in cases of Bankruptcy. It is universally admitted that if a trader, after the test of a writ of execution, and after a levy, commit an act of bankruptcy, the whole of his property becomes vested in the Commissioners of Bankruptcy, and passes to the assignees. Under the words of the statute "*all his property*," the execution creditor looses his lien arising from the levy: the relation to the test has no effect, because the commissioners came to the estate by act of law, and therefore, fraud cannot be imputed to them; for Bankruptcy is considered in law as an involuntary act. These cases, in principle, I think, cannot be distinguished: the wife comes to her estate by act of law, the death of her husband not being considered a voluntary and fraudulent transfer to defeat the execution creditor. The wife's title, therefore, being *bona fide*, and prior in point of time, must prevail against the purchaser under the execution. I have felt great delicacy in pronouncing this opinion, for it overrules a decision of this Court, made without argument, (a decision in which I concurred,) and founded on one made by Judge HAY-

WOOD, from which it was said, however, that Judge WILLIAMS dissented. I have therefore forborne to express it for more than twelve months after I had formed it; but a sense of duty compels me to forbear no longer. I therefore concur in opinion with the Chief Justice, that the Judgment of the Superior Court be reversed, and that Petitioners receive dower in the lands mentioned in the petition, and that this cause be remanded with such instructions.

HALL, Judge, *dissentiente.*—The argument for the petitioner is, that she comes in by law, and paramount the title claimed under the execution. Had the act of 1784, (*Rev. ch.* 204, *sec.* 8) never been passed, that argument would be irresistible. But I am of opinion, that act has done away the force of it altogether.

At common law, a widow was entitled to be endowed of all lands, of which her husband was seised at any time during the coverture. By the act of 1784, she is entitled to dower, in all lands of which her husband died seised or possessed, provision is also made against fraudulent conveyances, made with intent to defraud her of dower. The question here is, whether the husband died so seised or possessed of the lands in question, as to give her a title to dower in them.

At common law, it was *generally*, but not *universally* true, that a wife was entitled to be endowed of any lands of which the husband was seised during the coverture, she was not dowable of lands given in exchange, and lands taken in exchange, but she might make her election. The wife of a feoffee upon condition, after condition broken and entry by feoffor, is not entitled to dower, nor is the wife of a mortgagee; many other cases might be put, (*Co. Lit.* 31 13—*Saunders on uses & trusts*, 84 192—*Pow. on mortgages*, 142—*Ba. abt. dower, B.* 4, *g.*)

When a judgment is obtained, it immediately binds a moiety of the debtors land, (*Gil. on executions*, 55) as

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well as reversions on leases for life or years, (*Ibid.* 38-9) and if the debtor marry afterwards and die, I apprehend the widow's right to dower in those lands, would yield to the lien, created by that judgment.

In *Grevill & Bracebridge*, (*Co. Lit.* 290, *a. n.* 248) "the conusor leased for years and died, the question was whether the execution bound the term for years, against the wife's right of dower. The Court were of opinion, that if the marriage took place before the statute, it should not be extended, because the wife was in by the husband, and therefore had the better possession, and came in paramount the statute; but if the statute was before the marriage, there, clearly the dower of the wife was extendible." The law therefore, seems to be, that as the wife's right to dower commenced with the marriage, it was subject to all pre-existing incumbrances, but not to subsequent ones. So if a moiety of the debtor's land is extended under a latter judgment, a former judgment shall extend half of what was first extended, which leaves one fourth of the whole, the amount properly extendible under the second judgment, (*Gil. on execution*, 55); here there are no purchasers, and still the first execution preserves its lien.

It may be observed also, that under the *elegit*, the sheriff delivers only the legal, not the actual possession, so that the tenant by *elegit*, as well as a purchaser under a *fi. fa.* must bring ejectment against those in possession, (*Ibid.* 44, 2 *Eq. Ca. abd.* 380, 381.)

In this case, the wife's right to dower commenced by the death of the husband, and the question is, how far it is bound by the execution which issued prior to the death of the husband.

By statute 5, *Geo.* 2, lands are made liable to the payment of debts, and are subjected to the same process for that purpose as personal estates. By the act of 1777, (*Rev. ch.* 115, *sec.* 29,) it is declared that all process shall issue against goods and chattels, lands and tene-

ments, but personal property shall be levied on in the first place, if to be found, if not, it shall be *executed upon lands, &c.* and such lands shall be sold to satisfy the judgment. It therefore appears, that lands are placed upon the same footing for payment of debts, with personal estate. In *Jones & others* v. *Edmonds*, 3 *Murph.* 46, the Court say, that making land subject to the like remedies with personal estate, placed it on a footing with personal estate in every case, where those remedies are resorted to. Lord *Holt* says, after a seizure of goods by the Sheriff, the Defendant is discharged, and the goods are in the custody of the law. (1 *Salk.* 122—6 *Mod.* 299.) But it is said the Sheriff cannot take lands into his manual possession, as personal property. It is not necessary, that the should, for they are always in place. But the debtor's right is as much bound, as the case of personal property. If the execution *per se*, does not completely divest the Defendant's right, it creates a lien upon it, the Defendant can only sell it subject to that lien, and though he die before the return of the execution, it may be still sold. It is certainly a lien paramount the wife's claim to dower, which commences with the death of the husband.

But whether the issuing of the execution divested the Defendants title or not, I think it was divested when the Sheriff sold and conveyed the land, for that sale had relation to the issuing of the execution, anterior to the husbands death, (1 *Hayw.* 247.)

The case in 8*th Johnston* 520, relied on, to prove that a seizure of land under an execution, does not divest the estate of the debtor, was where the land was levied upon and sold, but no deed executed, nor the purchase money paid. But in the same case, page 550, the "Chancellor (who delivered the opinion of the Court) said that he was satisfied that the Defendant's interest in the land was not otherwise affected by the seizure, than as it became an inceptive step to a legal transmutation of his estate, if

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other requisites had followed to consummate it." If a deed had been executed, it would, I think, have related back to that inceptive step. (3 *Com. Dig. execution D.* 1.)

It has been decided in this Court, that if a constable levies upon land, and makes return to Court, and there is an order for a sale by the Sheriff, and other executions issue from the same term, the creditor for whose benefit the order of sale was made, is entitled to the proceeds of the sale, in preference to the creditors in the executions, because the lands were first attached and levied upon by the constable for that purpose, (1 *Murph.* 266, 2 *Hawks* 569.) And if the debtor had died after the levy and before the sale, in that case, I should not think the wife would be entitled to dower in the lands. It is said that in case a younger execution is first executed, it will not be set aside in favor of the lien, created by an older one; that is true, and the reason is founded in policy, the sheriff has acted wrong in executing the youngest execution first, when he ought to have executed the oldest first, and it makes him answerable to the creditor in the oldest execution, rather than the purchaser under the youngest. Lord *Holt* says, sales made by Sheriffs under executions, ought not to be defeated, otherwise there will be no purchasers at execution sales, (1 *Ld. Ray.* 252, 4 *East.* 539.) But this is not the case when there are no third persons concerned as purchasers, as in the case before put of a latter judgment, upon which an *elegit* was issued and lands extended, such extent was obliged to yield to an *elegit* issuing on an older judgment. In this case, if the husband had contracted to sell the land, and there was no execution against him, I suppose the land would be bound by the contract, the heirs would be bound to convey, and the wife would be barred of dower. But if the Defendant in this execution, had conveyed after the *teste* of the writ and died, that conveyance could not stand in the way of the execution, the purchaser under it would be entitled to recover against

the alienee of the husband, because, after the teste of the execution, the husband could not convey; but still that conveyance would bar the wife's dower, because the husband did not die seized or possessed of the land. If then the wife can recover against the purchaser, under the execution, we are in this predicament, the wife can recover against the purchaser under the execution, the alienee of the husband can recover against the wife, and the purchaser under the execution, can recover against the alienee.

Dower in copy hold estates, or what is called the widows *free bench*, seems much to resemble dower under our act of 1784. It is a right to dower in such lands as the husband died seized of, &c. (2 *Atk.* 525—3 *Lev.* 385—*Cowp.* 482.) The husband died seized of copy-hold estate, but had contracted during his life, for the sale of it, it was held, that the wife's right to dower was bound by that contract, (*Cro. Ca.* 568—*New. on con.*—3 *Ves.* 256,) and so I think it would be under our act of Assembly. If so, I am led to believe that a levy on land or a *fi. fa.* from its *teste*, before the death of the husband, would bind the wife's right to dower in lands of which the husband died seized. I can see no reason why an execution should not bind the land as much as a contract to sell by the husband, for the lien by the execution as well as the contract, both take place *before* the death of the husband, and as her right to dower commenced *at* the death of the husband, she must take it subject to any lawful incumbrances, which are upon the land at that time. I therefore think the petition ought to be dismissed with costs.

JUDGMENT REVERSED, AND CAUSE REMANDED.

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Samuel Guy
v.
William McLean. } From Iredell.

The consideration of a bond can be impeached, at law, only upon the ground that it is against an express enactment, or against the policy of the law.

When A gave a bond in discharge of one made by B, evidence that the latter was obtained by fraud, of which A had no notice, is not admissible in an action upon the former.

DEBT on a single bond, made by the Defendant to *Noah Partee*, and assigned to the Plaintiff after it became due.

On the trial the Defendant offered to prove, that the bond was given to satisfy three others, made by the Defendant's brother, *James M'Lean* to *Partee*, one of which was fraudulently obtained by *Partee*, having been executed when *James* was drunk, and did not know what he was doing, and that this was unknown to the Defendant, when he delivered the bond in suit.

His honor Judge DANIEL, rejected the evidence, as not constituting a defence in a court of law. A verdict was rendered for the Plaintiff; a rule for a new trial being discharged, and Judgment entered up according to the verdict, Defendant appealed.

The opinion of a majority of the Court, was delivered by HALL, Judge.

If a bond is given upon no consideration, or upon an inadequate one, that constitutes no objection in a Court of Law to a recovery upon it. Proof of the fair execution of it precludes any examination into the consideration upon which it was given, unless that consideration was against the policy of the law, as for compounding a felony, (2 *Wilson*, 344) or against the express provisions of law, as upon a gaming or usurious consideration. Upon these and other like considerations, a recovery upon a bond may be barred, although the fair execution of

it be proved: but proof of fraud or misrepresentation, as to the subject matter of the consideration on which a bond is given, (in case the fair execution of it is established,) is inadmissible in a Court of Law;—in such cases a Court of Equity is the proper tribunal in which to seek redress. (*Plow.* 309. *Pow. on contracts*, 332, 340, 1 *cha. Rep.* 157. 1 *E. C. Al.* 84, *pl.* 1. *Hard. Rep.* 200. 2 *Bl.* 446.) For these reasons I think the Judge was right in rejecting the evidence in the Superior Court.

TAYLOR, C. J. *dissentiente*—The principle is too clear to be controverted, that a contract cannot be enforced in a Court of Law, if entered into by a person so drunk as to be incapable of deliberation. It results from the general principles of justice, that as the essence of a contract consists in consent, a person must be capable of yielding that consent, and must necessarily have the use of his reason, that he may have the ability to contract; he must be mentally as well as corporally present. When, therefore, drunkeness has proceeded so far, as absolutely to destroy the reason, it renders a person in that state, so long as it continues, incapable of contracting, since it renders him incapable of consent. There is such a perfect harmony of opinion on this subject, among all the writers, who have traced the rules, that ought to govern human conduct, up to the first principles of natural reason, that it seems singular at first view, that any thing should be found, in our equitable system, apparently in collision with so reasonable and just a doctrine. (1 *Pothier*, 29. *Erskine's Institutes*, 447. *Puffendorf*, *B.* 1, *c.* 4, *s.* 8.) The rule seems to be settled, that if a man enters into an agreement in a state of drunkenness, Equity will not on that account alone set it aside, particularly where it is a reasonable one to settle family disputes. (3 *P. W.* 130 *n.* 1 *Vezey*, 19.) But if any advantage be taken of him, while he is in that situation, or if he is brought into it, by the contriv-

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ance and management of the person, who obtained the deed from him, this would be fraudulent. (1 *Cha. Cas.* 202.)

It will be found, however, upon an examination of the cases, that the rule in a Court of Equity, relates only to the common case of intoxication, on which account, alone, that Court will not set aside an agreement, more especially if it be reasonable in itself. It will not interfere on either side, not to assist a person who has obtained a deed from another, in a state of intoxication; nor to aid the person giving a deed in that situation, to set it aside. But with respect to that extreme state of intoxication, that deprives a man of his reason, such as this case describes, I cannot doubt that a Court of Equity would, as a Court of Law clearly will, pronounce a deed invalid, if executed in that state, whether the party voluntarily assume it, or be brought into it, by the contrivance and management of the other party. (18 *Vezey* 12, *Buller* 172.)

So far it appears to me to be perfectly clear, that if *James McLean* had been sued by the payee, on the bond which he gave for $100, he might have given in evidence, on the general issue, the condition in which he was when he executed the same, and thereby avoided it.

The next enquiry is, whether the Defendant may rely on the same defence, as against the Plaintiff, the assignee of the bond.

The act of 1786, which first made bonds negotiable, subjects them to the same rules with promissory notes; and, consequently, whatever may be set up as a defence against the endorsee of a note, is equally available against the assignee of a bond. It is well settled, that, any illegality in the consideration of a note, will affect an endorsee to whom it is assigned after it becomes due, for that circumstance renders it so suspicious, that the endorser must stand in the situation of the payee. The law will imply notice of the illegality of the considera-

tion, whenever such circumstances exist, as might reasonably be expected to incite a man to inquire into the contract between the original parties. Here the note was endorsed more than two months after it became payable, and it is therefore competent for the Defendant to avail himself of any defence, which he might have set up against the payee, such as fraud, want of consideration, payment, &c. (3 *Term. Rep.* 80. 88 *n.* 13 *East.* 497.)

It is however objected to the Defendant's availing himself of this defence, that *he* was not drunk when he gave the bond now sued for, that he executed it with full assent and deliberation, and that the consideration of this bond was not illegal, whatever might have been that of the $100 bond obtained from *James McLean.*

That this objection to the defence is not valid, will appear most clearly from an examination of the celebrated case of *Collins* v. *Blantern, in* 2 *Wilson,* 348. In that case the principle of this objection was well considered, and overruled, upon reasoning, which appears to me quite satisfactory. As this part of the case presents the only difficulty I ever felt in it, and which is now entirely removed from a consideration of the case just quoted, and one other, I find it necessary to be somewhat particular in the statement of them, in order to place my opinion in its true point of view. *John Rudge* had indicted five persons for perjury, in five several indictments, which were all ready to come on for trial, when the corrupt agreement was made. That agreement was, that *Rudge* would not appear to prosecute the indictments, provided *Edward Collins,* a stranger, would execute his note of hand to *Rudge* for the sum of £350, and it was agreed at the same time, that two of the Defendants in the indictments, together with *Robert Blantern,* then a stranger, should enter into a bond, conditioned for the payment of the same sum, as an indemnity to *Collins,* in the event of his being compelled to pay the note to *Rudge.* The note and the bond were executed on the

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same day; *Collins* sued *Blantern* on the bond, and one of the grounds of defence relied on was, that *Collins* was not privy to the corrupt agreement, and the consideration of the bond, at least, was not unlawful, however the note may have been. But the Court held clearly, that the whole transaction is to be considered as one entire agreement; that the manner of the transaction was intended to gild over and conceal the truth, and that whenever Courts of Law see such attempts made to conceal such wicked deeds, they will brush away the varnish, and show the transactions in their true light.

In that case *Collins* was privy to the corrupt agreement: in this, *Guy*, the Plaintiff, was connected with the illegal transaction by operation of law, in receiving the endorsement of the bond after it became due, and when by applying to the Defendant, he might have obtained information of the illegality of the consideration.

In that case *Blantern* knew that his bond was given to indemnify *Collins* against a note, which was founded on a corrupt agreement: in this, the Defendant was not apprised when he gave his bond, that one of his brother's bonds had been fraudulently obtained from him, but received them on the assurance of *Guy*, that they were all good.

A stronger light is thrown on this part of the case, by what is said by the Court in the case of *Cuthbert* v. *Haley*, 8 *Term. Rep.* 390.

The principal decision was, that if an usurious note is transferred to an innocent endorsee, for a valuable consideration, and afterwards the maker of the note give his bond to the endorsee for the amount, the bond is good. In giving their opinion, the Court say "that if one security be substituted for another by the parties, in order to get rid of the statute of Usury, the substituted as well as the original security will be void."

The sole reason of the distinction must be the innocence of the endorsee, and the guilt of the party who con-

sented to the usury. If there is any difference, where the new security is given by the borrower, and a stranger, ignorant of the original transaction, it must be altogether in favor of the latter; and that is precisely the case we have to decide.

Nor does it impair the defence offered in this case, that part of the consideration of this bond was legal, inasmuch as two of *James McLean's* bonds, for which it was given, were untainted by fraud; for I take it to be clear law, that when a security is partly given for an illegal consideration, the whole of it is void and cannot be apportioned. (*Scott* v. *Gilmore*, 3 *Taunt.* 226. 1 *Mur.* 349.)

The cases I have cited are relative to contracts made void by statute: but there is no difference between them, and contracts void at common law, as it is strongly said by Lord C. J. *Wilmot* in *Collins* v. *Blantren*: "I think there is no difference between things made void by act of Parliament, and things void by the common law. Statute law and common law both originally flowed from the same fountain, the *legislature*. I am not for giving a preference to either, but if to either, I should be for giving it to the common law: if there had even been any idea or imagination, that such a contract as this could have stood good at common law, surely the legislature would have altered it. There has been a distinction mentioned between a bond being void by statute, and at common law, and it is said that in the first case, if it be bad or void in any part, it is void in *toto*; but that at common law, it may be void in part, and good in part, but this proves nothing in the present case. The Judges formerly thought, an act of Parliament might be eluded if they did not make the whole void: it is said, the statute is like a tyrant, where he comes, he makes all void; but the common law is like a nursing father, it makes only void that part where the fault is, and preserves the rest."

This case might have been reasoned upon other prin-

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ciples, such as that a bond void in its creation, cannot be made good by any subsequent transaction; but I have chosen rather to rest my opinion upon grounds more familar in practice.

Upon the whole case, I think the Defendant is entitled to a new trial, and that if the allegations made by him relative to the contract, as stated in the case, are established to the satisfaction of the Jury, he is entitled to a verdict in his favor.

Redmond Crumpler et. al.
v.
The Governor.
} From Wake.

Where judgment is entered up summarily, against the sureties of a Sheriff, upon a proper case, it will be set aside.

In a bond given for a specific object, general words shall be construed with reference only to that object.

Therefore, when a bond is given with a condition that A. M. shall "collect the *county contingent tax*, and in all things perform his duty as Sheriff," held, that the public taxes cannot be recovered on it.

At Spring Term 1823, before BADGER, Judge, judgment was, on motion, entered up against the present appellants, sureties of *A. McAlister*, sheriff of Sampson, upon the following certificate:

I *Joseph Hawkins*, Comptroller, of the Treasury of the State of North-Carolina, do hereby certify the above and foregoing account to be raised from documents filed in this office, except as to the fine, which is charged agreeably to law. I likewise certify, that agreeably to the certificate of the Clerk of the County Court of Sampson, *Redmond Crumpler*, &c. are named, and returned, as the securities of *Alexander McAlister*, sheriff of the aforesaid county of Sampson, and being liable, with him, for the taxes of 1821, payable on or before the 1st of October 1822, and it is wished, that judgment be had against them accordingly, in favor of the Governor, for the use of the State aforesaid. Signed, J. HAWKINS, Compt.
J. HAYWOOD, Pub. Treas.

March 31*st*, 1823.

A *fi. fa.* issued on this judgment, which was superseded under the *fiat* of the Chief-Justice. At the next term a rule was obtained upon the Plaintiff, to shew cause why the judgment should not be vacated, and the execution set aside. Upon shewing cause, it appeared that the Defendants, in the original suit, were ignorant of the motion to enter up the judgments; that *McAlister* and his sureties executed only the following bonds, viz. one payable to the Governor for 4000 dollars, conditioned to account for the *poor taxes;* one other also payable to the Governor, for 4000 dollars, conditioned to account for the *county contingent taxes;* one payable to the Chairman of the County Court, for 4000 dollars, conditioned to account for all monies received on account of public buildings, and a bond to the Governor for 10,000 dollars, conditioned to make *due return of all process coming to him as sheriff;* the conditions of *all* the bonds contained these general words, that the said A. M. should, "*in all things well, truly and faithfully, execute the said office,*" and "pay all fees and sums of money received by virtue of any process." His honor Judge MANGUM, at the request of the counsel for the present Plaintiffs, and *pro forma*, discharged the rule, whereupon the Plaintiffs appealed.

Badger for the Appellants.—1st. The court has power to vacate the Judgment. Upon this point, the presumption is with the Defendants, because the application is to assert that, which is the object of all law, viz. to do justice: the Defendants have been injured, and this is the only way in which they can be redressed. The present motion is analagous to those to set aside defaults, whether interlocutory or final; also to those cases in which relief is granted upon recognizances, where two nihils have been returned. The principle is, that where there is an injury, and the party has no means of obtaining redress, the court will set aside every thing to get at the justice of the case.

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2d. The Defendants are not bound to the State. They never became sureties for the collection of the public taxes; the general words in the condition of the bond, prescribed by the act of Assembly, refer to the general duties, for the performance of which the bond was given, (*Rev. Code, chap.* 118, 209) for if the general words in the bond required by the act, refer to the acts of the sheriff as a fiscal officer, then the prior general words are useless.

But further: the act of 1777 created an officer answering to the common law notion of a sheriff, the mere executive officer of a Court of Justice; his duties as a fiscal officer do not answer to this notion, but are superadded by the act of 1784, (*Rev. Code, chap.* 219) and by this act the sheriff is required to give bond for the collection of the public taxes. If the general official bond, required by the act of 1777, secures the taxes, both bonds cover them, and if the taxes are included in any case, they are in all; for the mere fact, whether the sheriff has, or has not, given bond under the act of 1784, cannot affect the construction of that required by the act of 1777, and it is clear that if the public taxes had been legally and specifically secured, they could not have been recovered upon the general official bond.

It is not contended that parties cannot bind themselves by a condition in a bond intended to effect an object different from that condition; but it is contended, that when four bonds are given, each of them having a specific object in view, general words will not refer to any thing but that specific object.

3d. The bonds are not of the kind, (allowing the Plaintiff to be bound by them,) on which the State is entitled to judgment upon motion; the act of 1784 gives the State judgment on motion, only where the bonds required by *that act* are given. A party may bind himself in any manner to the State, but this obligation cannot be enforced, except in the ordinary course of law.

4th. But the evidence in the principal case was not of the kind required by the act of 1784, chap. 269. The requisites are, that the certificate of the clerk, *when certified by the Comptroller, to be agreeable to the orignal,* shall be sufficient; clearly the original or a copy is required; nothing, however, is contained in the certificate of the Comptroller, but *his opinion.* It never was the intention of the Legislature to make him a judicial officer, and it is his duty to certify facts, not his deductions from those facts.

Haywood, for Appellee.—The judgment here was rendered regularly in pursuance of the acts of assembly of 1784 and 1787, (*Rev. Co. ch.* 219, *sec.* 6-7—*chap.* 269, *sec.* 1, 2, 3,) for irregularity of proceedings, must be decided in reference to the particular character of the suit, and what the *law* has pronounced to be *valid,* the court cannot consider *irregular.*

The certificate of the Comptroller is a substantial compliance with the act of 1787, for it is obvious that the legislature intended a substitution of *names,* only in place of the *bond,* before then required to be present. But if the certificate be *irregular,* the appellants are now confined to the enquiry whether they are *injured* by the judgment, and to the grounds made in the affidavit on which this rule was obtained. This method of setting aside judgment, is a substitute, in modern practice, for the writ of *auditu querela,* and applies only to cases of manifest *oppression,* or where *justice* has not been done, (1 *Mallory Entries* 79, *note* 4—*Hunter* v. *Kirk, Hawk's Rep.* 277—3 *Blackstone,* 406—1 *Bos. Rep.* 428—10 *Mass. Rep.* 101—*Ld. Raym. Rep.* .) It is an application to the discretion of the Court, and even if there be irregularity, they may refuse, for it is not like a writ of error, where the errors are assigned specially, and the Court pass on the question according to *strict law*—and the court *will* refuse it in this case, because on the re-

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cord, justice is in favor of the state; for 1st, the bond here given in the penal sum of £2000, was clearly intended by the parties to be that required by the act of 1784; this I infer, because the penalty is the same pointed out by that act; it is made payable to the Governor as the act requires, and as the legislature prescribed no form of *words* in which the bond is to be taken, if the condition be broad enough to cover the default of the sheriff, it will be so construed as to give the security intended by law, (*Gully* v. *Gully*, 1 *Hawks*, 20—*the Governor* v. *Franklin*, 4 *Hawks*, 274,) and that this bond was so intended, is further to be inferred from the fact, that the other bonds required by law, are taken at the same time, viz. the bonds prescribed by acts of 1777 and 1798, (*Rev. code, ch.* 118—*Ibid. ch.* 509.)

2dly. If this bond be so taken, that this summary relief was not properly allowable in the first instance, still from the cases above cited, it is clear that these appellants would be subjected to the payment of the sum here recovered, by suit at common law, (see also 2 *Hawks*, 366, *and* 3 *Hawks*, 42.) So that the only consequence of setting aside this judgment, will be, to drive the state to another action, without affording any actual relief to appellants, and in matters of *discretion*, the court will always so act as to promote justice without an increase of litigation and expense.

In answer to both these grounds, it is said by the adverse counsel, that it is no part of the sheriff's duty, *as such*, to collect and account for the public taxes, but that he does so in the character of *commissioner* or *trustee*, to which I reply, that it has been made his duty as *sheriff*, in this State, by the express words of the act of 1791, (*Rev. Co.* 650, *ch.* 334,) antecedent to which time, it may be admitted, that he collected them as *County Treasurer*, though the contrary is I think, fairly to be inferred from the acts of 1784 and 1787, already referred to.

It is perhaps worthy of remark, that in the case of *Gully* v. *Gully*, the proceedings were *summary*, though the bond was informally taken, and this case differs much from the one cited 2 *Hawks* 5, in this—here it is not, as in that case, an objection taken at the *time* of entering up judgment, but this is an application to the *discretion* of the court afterwards made; in this case, no form is prescribed by law, in which the bond ought to have been taken, and here too, the *penalty* is the same required by law, in that case the *penalty* was *greater*.

Badger, in reply.—It is said, that the bond taken to secure the contingent county tax, is *an attempt* to secure the public taxes, but county taxes are directly opposed to public, and are so called in contradistinction, to poor taxes, and if it be an attempt, it has utterly failed.

It is clear, and will be admitted, that the sureties are bound only to the amount of the penalties of all the bonds; but if this judgment stands, to which bond is its amount to be applied? Certainly the Plaintiff in an execution, can only have redress upon the general official bond; suppose then, the recovery in this case to be large enough to satisfy the penalty of that bond; are the citizens deprived of all redress? So if it be applied to the bond for the county tax and absorbs its penalty, is the county remediless? This argument proves, that each bond is intended to secure its avowed and specified object, and its weight is much increased, when the sureties to each are different, for in that case, which set of sureties are chargeable, there being general words to bind them all?

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—Various acts of Assembly have, at different times, imposed duties upon the sheriff which did not, in a strict and common law sense, appertain to the office as such; and have endeavored to enforce the performance of these duties, by prescribing in substance, the several conditions of the bonds required to

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be given. While he had no other duties to perform, than such as properly belong to the office of sheriff, the bond was directed to be made payable to the Governor, as it yet is, and his successors in office, and conditioned for the due execution of the duties, incident to his office as sheriff, viz. the return of process and precepts, the payment of money levied by virtue of them, and the proper performance of his duty in any other respect. (1777, c. 118, *R. C.*) Afterwards he was required to enter into a bond payable in the same manner, and to be conditioned for the due collection from the collectors, and the payment and settlement of the *public taxes*. 1784, c. 219.

The only other bond required, is to be made payable to the chairman of the County Court, and conditioned for the due collection of, and accounting for, the county and poor tax. 1798, c. 509.

The bonds into which the sheriff actually did enter in this case, are, 1st. one payable to the Governor, and conditioned for accounting for the monies he may receive for the *poor taxes* of the county, followed by a general condition for the performance of his duty as sheriff.

2. One payable to the Governor, and conditioned for accounting for all monies that the sheriff may receive on account of the *county contingent taxes;* and a general condition for satisfying all sums, and fees, received, or levied, by him, by virtue of any process; and for the faithful performance of the duty of sheriff.

3. One payable to the chairman of the court, conditioned for accounting for the monies he may receive, on account of the public buildings; followed by a general condition like the others.

4. One payable to the Governor, and conditioned for the performance of his office as sheriff.

The only one of these bonds upon which it can be contended, with any shadow of argument, that the securities are chargeable, is that payable to the Governor, and conditioned for the payment of the county contingent

taxes. But they cannot be charged, by force of these words, without putting upon them a sense which they will not bear, either in their common acceptation, or from legislative exposition. No person could understand from them, that they import the public taxes, for they are used in contra-distinction to them, both in common discourse, and in the several acts of Assembly. One bond is to be given for the public taxes; another for the county and poor tax; nor is there any law which uses the terms, county contingent taxes, as signifying public taxes. So far from it, that county taxes are called those, that are levied to defray the contingencies of the several counties, for the purpose of distinguishing them from the taxes which are levied for the use of the public treasury. (1777, c. 129.)

So, that if this bond had been made payable to the chairman of the County Court, the securities would, by force of the terms, have been made chargeable for the county taxes, for they must necessarily understand that for these, and these alone, they were called upon to subscribe the bond.

But it is said that if the securities are not chargeable by force of these terms, they are nevertheless liable by the general obligation contained in the condition, viz. "to satisfy all sums, and fees, received or levied by him, by virtue of any process, and for the faithful performance of the duty of sheriff." Now this argument proves too much, for every other bond entered into by them contains the same engagement: so that they would be bound three times to the Governor, and once to the Chairman of the County Court, for the payment of the public taxes. They might then be sued for them, indifferently upon either of the bonds made payable to the Governor; whilst, when they entered into them, they must have clearly understood that each bond provided for a distinct and specific object. The general condition for the performance of the sheriff's duty, is improperly inserted in all the

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bonds, except that given under the act of 1777; it has no business there, and if put there by clerical caution or inadvertence, it can only be construed in subservience to the specific object which the bond is designed to secure; *noscitur a sociis*. Thus in the bond given under the act of 1777, it cannot be extended to other duties imposed upon the sheriff, by subsequent laws, which duties are of a nature not properly belonging to the office of sheriff, for which extra duties, as they may be called, bonds with a particular condition are required to be given. The securities to such a claim might properly answer, we have entered into no such stipulations. It may happen, that the sheriff is not able to prevail upon the same securities to subscribe all the bonds; one set may be willing to be responsible for his duty as sheriff; another for his collection of the public taxes; and a third for his collection of the county and poor taxes: yet, if the general terms are inserted in the condition, and are to be construed without regard to the subject matter of the bond, each set of securities will be liable for every default the sheriff makes in any of his duties. And, not liable by a common law process, with notice to them, and an opportunity of making a defence, but as in this case, by a summary proceeding and a judgment entered up, on the Comptroller's certificate.

If the condition of this bond had recited, that the sheriff, by virtue of his office, was bound to collect the county taxes, and to account for them according to law, the authorities are full to prove, that the general engagement afterwards inserted in the condition, shall receive such a construction as will restrain it to the particular duty for which the bond was given; and that in a case between individuals. I consider the doctrine thus established, as more directly applicable to the case of a public officer, whose peculiar duties are pointed out by a public law, and the substantial terms of the condition of the bond he is to give, also defined by it. The law hav-

ing, by a particular provision, imposed the duty, and defined its extent, a security called upon to execute a bond, would naturally confide that he was binding himself so far, and not further, than the law had bound the sheriff, and would not be likely to inquire, scrupulously, whether the bond contained a term beyond the law. Whatever answer this argument would admit of, in the case of a bond sued in common law, it seems to me decisive, when the bond is sought to be enforced by a summary remedy. The authority I rely upon for the construction of the condition of this bond, is the *Liverpool water works* v. *Atkinson*, (6 *East.* 507.) There the condition of the bond recited that the Defendant had agreed with the Plaintiff, to collect their revenues from time to time for twelve months; and afterwards stipulated that at all times thereafter during the continuance of such his employment, and for so long as he should continue to be employed, he would justly account, and obey orders. The breach assigned was the not accounting for money received after the twelve months, for a period during which the Defendant remained in the Plaintiff's service, which it was contended he was bound to account for, by force of the positive engagement contained in the bond. But it was held by the Court, that the general words must be construed to be restrained by the recital, stating an appointment for a specific time, and that the obligation must be confined to the twelve months.

For these reasons I am of opinion, that the Judgment should be reversed.

HALL, Judge.—The Judgment sought to be set aside, was obtained against *M'Allister*, for public taxes: four bonds are presented, some one of which, it is alleged, is sufficient to sustain the Judgment. One of these bonds may be laid out of view; it was given to the Chairman of the County Court, to collect taxes for public buildings; another was given to the Governor, in the sum of

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ten thousand dollars: as this bond does not, in its terms, agree with the provisions of the law, (being taken for a larger sum,) a summary remedy, such as has been resorted to in this instance, (2 *Hawks*, 5) cannot be had upon it; and it may also be laid out of view. Another bond is given to the Governor, in the sum of four thousand dollars, conditioned that the Sheriff shall account for the poor taxes of the County, and pay all fees and money, by him received, by virtue of any process; and in all other things, well, truly and faithfully execute the said office of Sheriff, during his continuance therein, &c.

A fourth bond is given to the Governor, in the sum of four thousand dollars, conditioned that the Sheriff shall account for all monies, that he shall receive on account of the *County contingent* taxes, and pay all fees and sums of money which he shall receive by virtue of any process, &c.; and in all things well, truly and faithfully execute the office of Sheriff, during his continuance therein.

It would appear to me that the different objects for which the two latter bonds were given, are specifically expressed in their conditions; and that the concluding words, "that he shall in all things well and truly, &c. execute the office of Sheriff," cannot cover, or guarantee the payment, of so important a part of the taxes as that due to the State; if this was the object, why are two bonds given of the same kind, and with the same securities, when one would have answered as well?

It appears to me that the concluding words mean, that *M'Allister* shall well and truly execute the office of Sheriff, as far as relates to the duties of the office, especially set forth in the preceding part of the bond.

I am inclined to think the Judgment complained of should be set aside.

HENDERSON Judge.—It must be admitted, that if the words "*county contingent taxes for Sampson county*," were entirely stricken out of the second bond, that the

general words which follow, to-wit, "that he in all things shall well and truly perform, the office of sheriff of the county of Sampson," would embrace the obligations for which this action is brought. But it is alleged, that these general words shall be restricted by the special duties prescribed by the preceding clause; and that they are to be understood as relating to his duties, touching the collection of the county contingent taxes, and none others. If these special words were properly there, and were such as this bond, as an official one, would enforce, I admit the correctness of this argument, for it would be contrary to the *intent* of the parties, to extend the general words, to other duties than those which grew out of, or properly belong to the special ones; for general expressions, when superadded, to special ones, are introduced from a consciousness of our inability to foresee, and point out, before hand, all that may be required in regard to the special ones. It is therefore nothing but fair construction, to confine them, to special things, before spoken of, or to things of a like kind. The question presented is however, nothing but a question of *intent;* if therefore, *that intent*, can be collected from the transaction itself, either verbal or written, it is sacrificing substance to form, to adopt such a rule of exposition. I would premise that the law does not, in this case, prescribe the form of the bond; it directs, in the act of 1784, that the sheriff shall give bond in the sum of £2000 payable to the Governor, that he will collect, from the tax gatherers the county tax, and pay it over to the district treasurers, and where the office of tax gatherer was abolished, and the sheriff directed to collect the taxes immediately from the people, nothing is said about his giving bond for that purpose, nor is he required by our acts, to give bond for the public taxes, except by the act requiring him to collect the county and poor tax, he is directed to give bond to the chairman of the Court, for the faithful collection of these taxes, *as well as for the public taxes.*

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Thus by implication only, recognizing that he was bound to give bond for the public taxes. According to our decisions, (which I still approve of) if the form of an official bond had been prescribed, and afterwards other duties are added, a bond given in the prescribed form, if that form is sufficiently broad to embrace those superadded duties, will enforce their performance; for although the duties were not in existence (if I may use the expression) when the form was prescribed, yet they were, when the bond was given, and the words thereof embracing them, they are therefore within its obligation. If the words of this bond embrace the duties of the sheriff as collector, we may fairly infer that it was so intended, for there is no prescribed form—it is payable to the Governor, in the sum required by law, conditioned for the faithful discharge of his duties as sheriff. The bond and the condition are consistent; it is payable to him who superintends the execution of the public law in regard to taxes; it is in the sum prescribed, and the duties of sheriff relate to the collection of the public tax; there is nothing but the words "*county contingent tax*," *to contradict this*; why were they inserted? By design, as expressive of the intent? It is presumed not, for the Governor has nothing to do with the collection of the county tax; as an official bond, and such this was designed to be? It is upon this supposition, a perfect nullity. It is fair to presume that the words meant something, if they were inserted by a mistake, as to their meaning, thinking they embraced the public tax, under the name of county contingent tax, (although that mistake would not make them embrace the public tax, if in fact they did not,) yet it would prevent *them* from controlling general words which do embrace them, and were intended to do so; if they were inserted by mere inadvertence, without thinking of their meaning, it would produce the same result. I am inclined to think therefore, that the general words are not restrained by the special ones, that the rule which

excludes them, is a mere rule of construction, to ascertain the intent, and that special words, inserted through ignorance or mistake, as it is evident those were, are without the spirit of the rule, and therefore, without the rule itself.

As to the objection to the certificate, it does not appear to be in due form, but it is unnecessary to set aside the verdict, when the result will be the same. The *judgment* is *regular*; if the objection had been made at the time it was entered, I think it would have prevailed, and although it may be said, that the Defendants had no notice, and could not have objected, yet it is a form of proceeding directed by the Legislature, and sanctioned for more than thirty years. It is true that any objection, which goes either to show, that the judgment is void, or for too much, will be considered by the Supreme Court as not waived or lost, by not being made, when in fact, no opportunity of defence was open, but it is not so as to the regularity of the evidence, when it appears *that* the evidence, irregular as it was, spoke the truth. It is not like an objection made to the regularity of the evidence on trial.

I am sorry therefore, that I cannot concur with my brethren, I think that the judgment should be affirmed.

Judgment of the Court reversed and rule made absolute.

JUDGMENT REVERSED.

The Governor for the use of Archibald Campbell, County Trustee
v.
William Barr, et. al.
} From Stokes.

The county tax cannot be recovered of the Sheriff upon the official bond required by the act of 1777.

DEBT upon a bond, conditioned that William Barr should "well and truly execute, and due return make, of all process, &c. and pay and satisfy all fees and sums

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of money by him received, &c. and *in all other things well, truly and faithfully execute the office of Sheriff, &c.*" The breach assigned was that *Barr* had not paid over certain County taxes, which "he had collected and received by virtue of his office as Sheriff." After oyer, the Defendants plead, 1st. *non est factum.* 2d. Conditions performed, and not broken. 3d. That they sealed and delivered their bond for 2000 dollars, to the Chairman of the County Court of Stokes, conditioned that *Barr* should account for the county tax; that judgment had been obtained on the same for the sum of 3024 dollars, of which 1024 dollars, had been remitted, concluding with an averment that the sum so remitted, was the sum now sought to be recovered.

Upon the third plea, his honor Judge NORWOOD, intimating an opinion in favor of the Defendant, the Plaintiff was called and nonsuited; and a rule to set the nonsuit aside, and grant a new trial, being discharged, the Defendant appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff in this Court.

The case was submitted by *Murphey* and *Gaston*, for the Defendant.

The opinion of the Court was delivered by HALL, Judge:

The bond on which this suit is brought, certainly cannot be converted by the declaration, into an obligation upon the Sheriff to pay the County tax. The bond is a proper one, given to the Governor, and conditioned that the Sheriff shall "execute all process," &c. and "pay and satisfy all fees and sums of money to the persons by law entitled to them;" but nothing in the bond makes it his duty to collect the County and poor tax. The Defendant states that he gave a bond to the Chairman of the County Court, for that purpose, and that Judgment was obtained against him upon it.

I have no hesitation in saying, that the nonsuit should not be set aside, and that there ought not to be a new trial.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

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Leroy Stow
v.
Levi Ward et. al. } From Lincoln.

Devise "that the residue of my estate, real and personal, be equally divided between the heirs of my brother *John Ford*, (he being noticed as living,) the heirs of my sister *Nancy Stow*, the heirs of my sister *Sally Ward*, and nephew *Levi Ward*."

Held, that the *real estate* must be divided *per stirpes*, and that *Levi Ward* takes one fourth under the devise to him by name, and a share of the fourth devised to the *heirs of Sally Ward*.

Devise "to the heirs of A," they take in the same proportion as if the estate had descended to them from A.

Nathan Ford by his will, devised as followeth, "I give to my brother *John Ford*, two hundred acres of land," and (after several specific bequests) "*it is my will, and I do allow, that all the remaining part of my estate, both real and personal, be equally divided amongst the heirs of my brother John Ford, the heirs of my sister Nancy Stow, the heirs of my sister Sally Ward deceased, and nephew Levi Ward.*" *Levi Ward*, was the son of *Sally Ward*.

This case, which is reported 3 *Hawks* 604, came before the Court at this term, upon the return of the partition, made according to the interlocutory decree of this Court, at June Term, 1825.

The case was not again argued, and the opinion of a majority of the Court was delivered by HENDERSON, Judge:

When I take a review of the construction, which I once thought, I was bound by precedents, to give this will—precedents which in reality neither bore, or professed to bear upon it, so far as regards the real estate, and the struggles which I made in my own mind, to get rid of them, it appears that I must then have labored under something like a delusion; for it was never for a single moment doubted, as far as I can collect from authorities, that where persons come to an estate as heirs,

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whether by descent as having been in by their ancestor, or by purchase as a new acquisition, under the description of heirs, that they take *per stirpes* and not *per capita*; they take it in a representative and collective character, and as to others, are considered as an unit, however they may subdivide and parcel out the property among themselves; they take not individually, but collectively, not separately, but conjunctively. A, has a daughter, and two grand-daughters, daughters of a deceased daughter, his lands descend one half to his daughter, and the other half to his two grand-daughters. So if the limitation had been to the heirs of A, making them take as purchasers, they would take the estate in the same proportions, that is *per stirpes*, and not *per capita*; in the case of the descent, the lands of which A died seized, descend to his daughter and grand-daughters, as persons designated by the canon of descent, under the description of heirs, or rather *as* heirs; in the latter case the same canons of descent, point out the purchasers, and they take the same porportions as if the lands had descended from A. It is a fallacy to say, that the law designates the persons, and the will points out a separate, equal, and individual interest in each—the will points to them as a unit, and the canons of descent does the same. I have not a doubt but the presiding Judge was right when he said, the devisor intended a division by stocks or families; if so, he could not have used a word in our language more appropriate, for the reasons given in the case of *Croom* v. *Herring*, 4 *Hawks* 393.

Suppose one of the brothers had died after the date of the will and before the testator, leaving ten children, the surviving brother or sister of the testator, would have to share equally with all these children, and get, instead of a third or a fourth, only a twenty fifth part, or less if there were more children. The testator having in his will given a legacy to his brother, thereby noticing that he is alive, the word heirs, is to be construed heirs ap-

parent, not only as to his heirs, but as to all where the parents are alive, that is, where it is necessary. Dec. 1826. Farrar v. Alston.

I must confess, I feel some difficulty as to the double portion of *Levi Ward*, but the strong inclination of my mind is, and so I must decide, that he is entitled to one fourth, under the description given by name, and to one half of one fourth under that "of heirs of *Sally Ward*."

The former decree must be set aside, and the decree of the Superior Court reversed; for by that, *Levi Ward* was allowed only half of one third, whereas he is entitled to three eighths, to-wit, one fourth, and one half of one fourth. Let it be decreed, that the estate be divided into four equal parts, and that one fourth be allotted to the heirs of *John Ford*, one fourth to the heirs of *Nancy Stow*, one fourth to the heirs of *Sally Ward*, and one fourth to *Levi Ward*.

The authorities which perplexed us in this case, relate entirely to personal property.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, dissented.

DECREE REVERSED.

John Farrar v. Philip Alston. } From Chatham.

When no loss is occasioned by a falsehood, an action for a deceit will not lie; neither will it, when ordinary prudence would have prevented the deception.

A being surety for B, is falsely informed by C, administrator of B, that the debt is paid: trusting to this representation, A uses no means to secure himself. Qu. Does deceit lie?

CASE for a deceit. The allegations of the declaration were, that the Plaintiff and one *Drake* became sureties for one *Ramsay*, to the Bank of Cape-Fear; that upon the death of *Ramsay*, the Defendant, being his administrator, *falsely* and *fraudulently* affirmed to the Plaintiff that the note was taken up; upon which affirmation the

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Plaintiff relying, used no means to secure himself; that afterwards, when the assets of *Ramsay* were exhausted by other debts, and when *Drake*, the co-surety, "who was, at the *time of their becoming jointly bound* as aforesaid, amply sufficient to pay one half, had failed and become unable to pay any part thereof," the Plaintiff had been compelled to pay the whole debt.

It appeared on the trial, that *Ramsay* died in October, 1820, possessed of a large estate: administration was committed to the Defendant in November following; upon which the Plaintiff and *Drake*, fearing that *Ramsay's* estate would prove insolvent, applied to the Defendant, who *promised to pay the debt.* In March, 1822, suit was commenced by the Bank against the Plaintiff and the sureties; shortly after which the Defendant told *Drake*, who communicated it to the Plaintiff, *that the debt was paid*; execution for it, however, issued, and was satisfied by the Plaintiff.

His honor Judge DANIEL charged the Jury, that if the Plaintiff had been lulled asleep by the false declaration of the Defendant, and in consequence thereof had been compelled to pay the debt, he was entitled to a verdict, although the Defendant had assets sufficient at the time, to pay the debt; and that the affirmation made to *Drake*, and communicated to the Plaintiff, was evidence to them.

A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff. A rule for a new trial being discharged, and Judgment rendered upon the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

Several points were made in the cause, which it is not necessary to notice.

Nash, for the appellant.—1st. The declaration sets out nothing but a naked lie. It contains no averment that the Plaintiff suffered from the falsehood of the Defendant. No *scienter* of the Defendant is alleged; it does not even aver that the amount of the debt has not been refunded to the Plaintiff.

2d. The breach of promise to the Plaintiff will not support this action; neither will the false affirmation made to *Drake* enable him to recover. (2 *Starkie's E.* 473, *note L.* 1 *Esp. R.* 290. *Peak's Cases*, 226. 2 *Starkie's E.* 471. 12 *East.* 631.)

3d. The Plaintiff, by using ordinary diligence, might have prevented any ill consequence arising from the falsehood complained of; and when this is the case the action cannot be sustained.

Gaston, for the appellee.—Admitted that no action of this form would lie for the breach of promise made to the Plaintiff; he however contended,

1st. That the declaration set out a sufficient cause of action to warrant a judgment after verdict; for a good title defectively stated, is aided by verdict. (1 *Tidd*, 406. *do.* 886.)

A sufficient title to damages appears upon the face of the declaration; for whenever fraud and damage concur, this action lies. (3 *D. & E.* 56. *Cro. J.* 474. 1 *Salk.* 211.)

2d. Where the Plaintiff has the full means of learning the falsity of an allegation, this action will not lie: this was a matter known only to the Defendant and to the creditor. (1 *Salk.* 211.)

3d. The affirmation made to *Drake* supports this action: it was false and damaged the Plaintiff.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The declaration is defective for want of an allegation, that the fraud charged on *Alston*, was intended to injure *Farrar*. It is also defective, for want of an allegation as to the sufficiency of assets in *Alston's* hands, for *Farrar's* indemnity, at the time the assertion was made that the debt was paid, and as to the solvency of *Drake* at the same time: it states, it is true, *Drake's* solvency at the time he became joint surety, but that is not the material fact. But there is a

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substantial error in the Judge's charge. He instructed the Jury, that the Plaintiff ought to recover, although it was shown that *Alston* then had assets. This would destroy the very foundation of the action, for the complaint is, that during the time that *Farrar* was lulled into security by the fraud of *Alston*, the assets of *Ramsay*, the fund to which *Farrar* was to look for his indemnity, were swept away, and that he was left without the means of obtaining satisfaction, upon *Ramsay's* implied promise of indemnity; for the action is not founded on his being obliged to pay the debt, for he contracted that obligation without the agency or interference of *Alston*. The Jury were improperly instructed, and there should be a new trial. What is said above, as to there being no charge, that the fraudulent act was intended to injure *Farrar*, was designed to apply to such a case as this, where the injury is not the direct, immediate and natural consequence of the fraud, for when such is the case, perhaps it needs no averment that such was the intent; as the law presumes that was intended, which is the immediate, direct, and natural consequence of an act, and the Court, as the law draws the inference, does not require that the Jury should do it. As this case may possibly be so amended as to present a statement of facts, which will enable the Plaintiff to recover, I think it best to reverse the Judgment, and award a new trial rather than arrest the Judgment. The Judge of the Superior Court will then exercise his discretion in permitting the Plaintiff to amend.

Hall, Judge.—Without looking strictly into the pleadings in this case, I concur in the opinion, that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute, because it does not appear, that in consequence of the deceit complained of, the Plaintiff cannot be compensated out of the assets of *Ramsay's* estate, in the hands of the Defendant.

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TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—I do not think that either of the two essential grounds of an action of deceit is established in this case, viz. a fraud committed by the Defendant, or a damage resulting from such fraud to the Plaintiff. The fraud is alleged to consist in *Alston's* telling *Drake*, that he, *Alston*, had paid off the debt for which the Plaintiff and *Drake* were security. But though this assertion was untrue, the means of ascertaining the truth were completely within the power of the Plaintiff; and if it were of sufficient importance to regulate his conduct in the transaction, it would obviously seem necessary, in the first place, to ascertain whether it were true or not. A person of ordinary prudence would not permit himself to be lulled into security, by giving full credit to an assertion, which was not made to himself, but reported to him by a third person. He would at least have applied to *Alston*, to ascertain the time and circumstances attending the payment, and how far the assertion had been deliberately made. But the sure way would have been to enquire at the Bank, whether he were still held responsible for the debt. If the Plaintiff was in fact deceived, it was the consequence of his credulity and negligence, and in such a case, the law does not profess to administer a remedy.

It does not appear from the declaration, or the statement, that any loss was occasioned to the Plaintiff, which would not equally have happened, if the promise or assertion had never been made.

The Defendant had no sooner administered on *Ramsay's* effects, than an apprehension was entertained that the estate was insolvent, and the Plaintiff and *Drake* applied in consequence to the administrator, who assured them that he had assets, and would pay the debt. This was about November, 1821, and the Plaintiff took no further step; when about four months thereafter, a writ was sued out against the administrator and the two

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endorsers, and at the return term in March, 1822, a joint plea was entered.

It might have been expected, that when the administrator had not paid the debt in that time, but suffered the endorsers to be sued, that it would impair their confidence in his promises, and urge, at least, the Plaintiff, the only solvent one, to provide for his own security.

But so far from its having this effect, the Plaintiff was again quieted, soon after the institution of the suit, by this assertion of *Alston*, reported to him by *Drake*, and allowed the suit to depend, until the fall of 1824, when the judgment was recovered. I do not perceive that the Plaintiff's paying the money was occasioned by the promise or assertion of the Defendant, but rather by his becoming endorser for a person whose estate was probably insolvent from the first, but if not, from his own negligence, in not securing himself when he might do so.

I think the Jury have been misdirected in point of law on the merits of the case; and it is not therefore necessary, to give an opinion on the minor points made in the cause. There ought to be a new trial.

JUDGMENT REVERSED.

Sarah B. Carter
v.
Solomon Graves.
} From Caswell.

A deed produced under a subpœna *duces tecum*, was left after the trial among the papers in the office:—*Held*, that it was subject to the control of the party producing it, and where the court below ordered the deed to be delivered up by the clerk—*Held* further, that the opposite party in the cause could not appeal from such order.

A deed from *Solomon Graves* to *Sarah B. Carter* having been produced on the trial of a former suit between these parties, under a *subpœna duces tecum* directed to the agent of *Sarah B. Carter*, and having been left a-

mong the papers of that cause, the clerk, under the instruction of *Solomon Graves'* counsel refusing to deliver it up, *Mrs. Carter* applied for permission to withdraw it from the office. By the direction of the presiding Judge, notice of this application was given to the counsel of *Graves*. The application was opposed, and on the argument the statement made in the cause heretofore tried between these parties, as reported in 2 *Hawks*, 576, was read and formed a part of this case.

His honor Judge DANIEL, directed the deed to be delivered up to the applicant, whereupon, *Solomon Graves* appealed.

This case was argued by *Badger* for the appellant, and *J. M. Morehead* for the appellee.

The opinion of the Court, was delivered by HALL, Judge.

It appears that the deed in question, was executed by the Defendant to the Plaintiff, that it was not in the possession, or under the control of the Defendant, but in the possession of the Plaintiff's agent. It was for this reason, that the Defendant procured a *subpœna duces tecum* to be served on the agent, to have the benefit of the deed on the trial of the suit set forth in this case; that when the deed was brought to Court, and after the trial of that suit, it fell into the hands of the Clerk of the Court, who was cautioned by the Defendant's counsel not to let it be taken out of the office. It is to regain possession of the deed that this application is made.

It is to be observed that the deed was private property, and the Defendant had no greater right to it after the trial, than he had before: the law interposed so far only, as to give him a right to use it as evidence in the trial of the suit; and the law would not be true to itself, if, after the purpose was answered for which it dispossessed the Plaintiff of the deed, it did not place her in *statu quo*, by re-delivering it to her: neither a right to

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the deed, or rights claimed under it, were intended to be disturbed by its production on the trial of that suit. It would therefore appear that the Court did right in directing the deed to be delivered up. But from another view of this case, it appears, that no effective opinion can be given on that point. By the act of 1818, ch. 962, sec. 4, appeals by either party, are permitted to be brought to this Court from any sentence, judgment or decree, made in the Superior Courts. In this case, Mrs. *Carter* made an application to the Court for the deed: legally speaking, *Solomon Graves* had no interest in that application; but the Court directed notice to be given to his attorney, not his attorney I presume in this case, but his attorney in the former suit; this did not make *Graves* a party defendant; it did not constitute in Court such *a cause*, as the act of Assembly contemplates in regulating and authorising appeals from the Superior Courts. This is a proceeding, *sui generis*.

I think the Defendant had no right to appeal, but that the appeal should be dismissed with costs.

APPEAL DISMISSED.

John Howell
v.
Martin Elliott.
} From Rutherford.

Possession retained by the vendor of chattels, does not, *per se*, make the sale fraudulent in law. It is but presumptive evidence of fraud, proper to be left to a Jury. To repel this presumption, the vendee may shew what consideration passed, though none be stated in the bill of sale.

TROVER for a horse, tried before DANIEL Judge. The Plaintiff claimed title under a bill of sale, from one *Spurlin*, the material parts of which were as follows:— "I, *Jesse Spurlin*, have this day bargained, sold, &c. unto *John Howell, sen.* one bay horse, one cow and calf, two feather beds and furniture, for which said property

I acknowledge myself fully satisfied and paid, and I do therefore warrant and defend the said property to the said *John Howell*, &c."

The subscribing witness proved that the bill of sale was given, upon the Plaintiff becoming surety for *Spurlin* to one *Wilson* for fifty-seven dollars, with an agreement, that if *Spurlin* paid the debt to *Wilson*, the property mentioned in the bill of sale should be *Spurlin's*: that the property was delivered to the Plaintiff, and then left by him in the possession of *Spurlin*. *Spurlin* paid to *Wilson* six dollars in part of the debt, and the residue, amounting, with the interest, to fifty-six dollars, was paid by the Plaintiff, and the value of the property conveyed, did not exceed that sum.

On the part of the Defendant, it was shewn, that the property continued in the possession of *Spurlin* from November, 1816, the time when the bill of sale was executed, until August, 1822, when the horse was seized under an execution against *Spurlin*, at the instance of the Defendant, sold and bought by the Defendant. It was also proved that in the month of August 1822, *Spurlin* having claims upon the Plaintiff for work and labor done, and they differing as to the amount due, submitted that question to arbitrators, who assessed the sum due *Spurlin*, at one hundred and thirty dollars, and awarded the payment thereof to him. *Spurlin* afterwards assigned his interest under this award, to one *McEntire*, who sued *Howell* in the name of *Spurlin*, and collected the money.

The presiding Judge instructed the Jury, that possession being retained by *Spurlin*, was not in itself a fraud, but was presumptive evidence of fraud, as was also the circumstance of taking a bill of sale absolute on its face, when a security for a debt was only intended; but that both were capable of being explained, and the presumption thence arising repelled by other facts and circumstances, that if the transaction was *bona fide*, the Plaintiff's title was not affected by the arbitration, for he was

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not bound to set off his claim in the action brought on the award; and that the Plaintiff was not precluded from shewing the consideration on which the bill of sale was founded, though it was not stated on the face of the bill of sale.

Under these directions, the Jury found a verdict for the Plaintiff; and a motion for a new trial on the ground of misdirection, having been overruled, and judgment rendered on the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

This case was submitted without argument by *Manly* for the Plaintiff, no counsel appearing on the other side.

The opinion of the Court was delivered by HALL, Judge:

Whatever of fraud may have been designed or practised in this case, was fairly left to the Jury; they have passed upon it, and it is not within the limits of our duty to review their decision.

The title to the horse in question, passed, by the bill of sale to the Plaintiff; whether the levy and sale took place before or after the arbitration between the Plaintiff and *Spurlin*, does not appear; if before, certainly the Defendant could derive no right from the purchase made by him at that sale; if after, the result must be the same, for it appears, (viewing the bill of sale as a mortgage) that the debt it was given to secure, has not been paid or satisfied. I therefore think the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

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Lyman Potter
v.
William Sturges. } From Stokes.

Where an agent collects money, no action accrues to the principal until a demand.

ASSUMPSIT on an accountable receipt given by the Defendant, a constable, for two notes, expressing that the notes were received from the Plaintiff *for collection.*

On the trial before DANIEL, Judge, a verdict was taken for the Plaintiff, subject to the opinion of the Court, whether, upon the following facts, the Plaintiff had any cause of action.

The Plaintiff resided in the State of Massachusetts, and had no agent residing in this State. The Defendant collected the amount of one of the notes, and might have collected the other; no demand was made, before the commencement of the action.

The presiding Judge was of opinion, that to sustain the action, it was necessary, that a previous demand should be shewn, or that at least there should have been a known agent of the Plaintiff within this State, authorized to receive the money, and directed the verdict to be set aside and a nonsuit entered, whereupon the Plaintiff appealed.

In this Court, no counsel appeared, and the opinion of the Court was delivered by TAYLOR, Chief-Justice:

Both the law and justice of this case have been in my opinion, duly administered, for the Defendant had done no act to put him in the wrong. He was not bound to leave the State to go in pursuit of the Plaintiff, and the latter had no agent here, to whom the payment could be made. If a man receive money to a special purpose, as to account or merchandize, it cannot be demanded of him as a duty, till he has neglected or refused to apply it according to the trust, under which he received it, and

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the declaration must shew a misapplication, or breach of trust; and though a verdict for the Plaintiff will aid such a declaration, and it will be presumed afterwards, that the Defendant refused to account, yet here the objection was taken at the trial, and the point reserved.—The law distinctly recognizes the principle, that if goods are consigned to a factor for sale on commission, that a contract arises, that he will account for such as are sold, pay over the proceeds, and re-deliver the residue unsold, whenever a demand is made. Nor will an action lie against him for not accounting, till after a demand made of an account; and from that period only, will the statute of limitations begin to run against the Plaintiff.

If this is a just rule as applicable to persons living under the same government; it is more so, where the Plaintiff has left the country, and put it out of the Defendants power to pay the money. (1 *Salk.* 9—1 *Taunton*, 571.) I therefore think, a non suit ought to be entered up.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

Elam M. Johnson
v.
Charles Carson.
} From Buncombe.

A having contracted to build a house for B, and the work not being finished within the time fixed by the contract, afterwards sold, without the consent of B, his interest in the house. Held, that nothing passed to the purchaser, and therefore his promise to pay, was *nudum factum*.

ASSUMPSIT.—The declaration contained a count for work and labor done, and also a special count stating, in substance, that the Plaintiff had contracted with one *Jason W. Wilson* to build a house upon his land, and the house not being entirely finished within the time specified in the contract, it was agreed between the Plaintiff and Defendant, that the latter should take the house in

its unfinished state, for the price agreed to be paid by *Wilson*, deducting therefrom, the value of the work remaining to be done. The breach alleged was the failure by the Defendant, to pay the money.

On the trial before DANIEL, Judge, the contract was proved as stated, and it was also shewn, that the Defendant, who was the brother-in-law of *Wilson*, lived two miles from the scite of the house, and that the land on which it was situate, was, after the contract stated in the declaration, sold to one *John Carson*, a brother of the Defendant. It was also in proof, that a chimney to the house was finished by the Defendant, but whether before or after *John Carson's* purchase of the land, did not appear—and that the Defendant had rented out the land as the agent of his brother. At the time of the trial an action was pending, brought by *Wilson* against the Plaintiff, for his failure to build the house, according to the original agreement.

The case was left to the jury without any instruction, none being asked by the Counsel, and a verdict being found for the Plaintiff, a motion was made for a new trial and denied, whereupon the Defendant appealed.

In this Court, no Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff, and *Gaston* for the appellant, submitted, without argument, a motion in arrest of judgment.

The opinion of the Court was delivered by HALL, Judge:

It appears in this case, that the Plaintiff covenanted with *Jason H. Wilson*, to build a house on the land of *Wilson*, for a certain sum of money; that when he had nearly completed the work, he sold the house to the Defendant for the same sum, deducting therefrom, the value of the work remaining to be done. To this contract, it does not appear that the assent of *Wilson*, was given. The Plaintiff's demand then, is founded on a promise made by the Defendant, to pay a sum of money, for pro-

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perty to which the Plaintiff had no right, and of which, of course, he could not dispose.

But it further appears, that the Defendant is the brother-in-law of *Wilson*, and that *Wilson*, after the agreement between the Plaintiff and Defendant, sold the house to *John Carson*, the Defendant's brother; it further appears, that part of the chimney was built to the house, by the Defendant, who rented it out for *John Carson*, but whether it was built before *John Carson* purchased it or afterwards, does not appear.

It is very *probable* from these circumstances, that the matter was well understood by the brotherhood, and that the Defendant's agency in purchasing the house, was approved of by *Wilson*, and that they acted in the transaction with one mind, but that they did so, has not been made to appear. It may have been otherwise, but it is too much to guess at. I therefore think that the Defendant's promise was made without consideration, and that the judgment ought to be arrested.

JUDGMENT ARRESTED.

Henry Williams v. Daniel Wood. } From Rowan.

A reference as to a disputed fact, is not analagous to a submission to arbitration; the latter implies an exercise of judgment, and gives an authority to decide; the former requires only the recollection of a fact, and the statement of it as a witness. Hence the statements of such a referee are not conclusive.

COVENANT upon the following instrument:

"The condition on which *Henry Williams* and *Daniel Wood* settled is this:—The said *Wood* is to pay to the said *Williams* three hundred and sixty dollars; one hundred dollars of which sum, was paid at or before the signing of this; and the balance to be paid as soon as they can conveniently get *James Brooks* to testify, what money was returned by him, to the said *Wood*, for *George Williams*, out of the two hundred and seven dollars, which sum *Williams* says he received, and

sent back, by said *Brooks*, to said *Wood*. Now if the said *Brooks* shall say that he returned the whole of the two hundred and seven dollars, then the said *Wood* is to pay said *Williams* two hundred and sixty dollars, and whatever he says he returned less than two hundred and seven dollars, to be deducted out of the two hundred and sixty dollars.

D. W. [L. S.]
H. W. [L. S.]"

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Brooks, on being asked, said he had returned but 100 dollars; the Plaintiff contended that *Brooks* had returned to *Wood* 200 dollars, whereupon this action was brought. On the trial, *Brooks* swore that he returned but 100 dollars. The Plaintiff proved that the Defendant and *Brooks* both, had acknowledged, that 200 dollars had been returned by the latter; this evidence was objected to by the Defendant, but was admitted by the Court; the Plaintiff also proved by several witnesses, that *Wood* had received 200 dollars by the hands of *Brooks*.

His honor, Judge DANIEL, charged the jury, that if they believed from the evidence, that *Brooks* swore falsely, or was mistaken, they ought to find for the Plaintiff. A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, a rule for a new trial discharged and judgment entered up upon the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

Nash, for appellant.—The parties have referred the matter to the decision of *Brooks*, as an arbitrator. In actions on arbitration bonds, the breach assigned must be either a refusal to submit, or non performance of the award. The Court cannot look beyond the written contract of the parties, even to alter the time. (*Kyd*, 293, *Yelver*. 153, 4 *Burr* 2229, 3 *D. & E.* 590.) Here the parties are in a Court of law, and the Plaintiff must recover according to the rules of law. The Defendant has covenanted to pay, whatever *Brooks* said was due. The Plaintiff seeks to recover a sum which *Brooks* says is not due.

The Judge erred in admitting the declarations of *Brooks*, and of the Plaintiff, to be given in evidence; because the law of the case to the parties, and to the Court

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was the award of *Brooks*. (*Kyd*, 311, 3 *D. & E.* 592, *note* 8 *Rep.* 82.)

Neither a Court of Law nor of Equity, can hear any thing in opposition to the covenant, substitute themselves in the place of the umpire, or vary the terms of the contract. (6 *Ves. J.* 34, 9 *ditto* 608, 13 *ditto* 78, 81, 14 *ditto* 401.)

Badger, for the appellee.—The only question is upon the construction of this instrument. It is not like an agreement to submit to arbitration, or a reference to ascertain value, which is the fact in all the cases cited.

Brooks was referred to, not as an umpire, to settle a controversy, or as a person of skill, to ascertain value, upon a contract then originated, but simply as a witness, to testify to a disputed fact. A reference creates a forum to decide between parties, and implies a power not only to decide as to facts, but to pronounce a definitive sentence, requiring an exercise of judgment, and if this forum does not act in the prescribed manner, the parties are remitted to their original rights.

Upon the principles contended for on the other side, if *Brooks* had died, or refused to say any thing, the Plaintiff could have no remedy. The original liability is extinguished by the deed, and having no right of action on this, he could not recover the sum which upon its face is due, clear of all controversy.

The Judge was right in receiving the testimony; *Brooks* came into Court as an ordinary witness, subject to all those tests by which the credibility of witnesses is ascertained.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—It appears to me that the intention of the parties to this covenant, does not admit of any reasonable doubt.

The Defendant undertakes to pay the Plaintiff the balance due to him, upon the settlement of their accounts. The precise sum due, depended upon the amount paid the

Defendant through the hands of *Brooks*, and on account of *George Williams*, who had borrowed two hundred dollars from the Defendant. If this whole sum had been repaid to the Defendant, he then owed the Plaintiff two hundred and sixty dollars; and that the fact was so, was alledged by the Plaintiff; if a less sum than the two hundred dollars had been repaid, then the balance due the Plaintiff, would be lessened in proportion; and this was contended for on behalf of the Defendant.

But as *Brooks* was known by both parties, to have been the instrument of payment, it was natural to refer to him, in the first place to ascertain the amount, and it could not have entered into the contemplation of either party, that his assertion as to the amount, should be conclusive upon them, if they could show, that either his memory, or his integrity, had abandoned him. This is evident from the words themselves, which are "as soon as they can conveniently get *James Brooks* to testify what money was returned;" which is equivalent to saying, as soon as they can get him to give evidence of the sum returned. As a witness, his evidence would be open to examination, and might be opposed by other testimony; nor would *Wood* have been bound by his assertion, if it had charged him with the receipt of the whole sum, any more than *Williams* is, when it charges him with less.

Taking this to be the clear intent of the parties, apparent upon the instrument, is right, according to the established rules of law, which are in this case, the dictates of natural justice, to be so construed as to correspond with that intention. A performance according to the letter, which contravenes the spirit of a covenant, is not a legal performance; as where the condition of a bond was, that the Defendant should, before a certain day, deliver to the Plaintiff a bond, wherein the Plaintiff was bound to the Defendant. If before that day, the Defendant sues the Plaintiff on the bond, and recovers, though on the day he delivers it up, yet it is no perfor-

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mance, for it could not be the intention of the parties, that it should be put in suit. (*Teats case, Cro. Eliz.* 7.)

And if the construction were even doubtful, the rule of law is, that it is to be taken in that sense, which is most strong against the covenantor, and beneficial to the other party; as a covenant to pay a certain sum *per annum*, without saying for how long, it was held it should be for the life of the Plaintiff. (1 *Lev.* 102.)

I think it follows irresistibly from these premises, that if the Defendant had been allowed to prevail on the plea of "covenants performed," by proving that *Brooks* had said he had returned only $100; and all enquiry had been shut out, as to the fact from other sources, it would not have been a real and faithful performance of the covenant, but evasive and illusory.

The law will not permit men thus to escape from their deliberate engagements, but uniformly exacts from them such a performance as will satisfy the true spirit and intention of the contract. Of this, the case of *Griffith* v. *Goodhand*, (*Tho. Raym*, 464) furnishes a strong illustration. There, the covenant was to deliver to the Plaintiff seven parts of all the grains made in the Defendant's brew house; and one breach assigned was, that the Defendant did put divers quantities of hops into the malt, of which the grains were made, by reason whereof, they were spoiled, and became unprofitable to the Plaintiff. After a verdict for Plaintiff, there was a motion in arrest of judgment, that this breach is out of the articles which contain no covenant not to put hops in the grains. But the Court held clearly, that as it was the intention of the parties, that the Plaintiff should have the grain for the use of his cattle, whatever rendered them unfit for that use, was a violation of the spirit of the contract, though within the letter. So if I covenant that I will leave all the timber, which is growing on the land I hire, upon the land at the end of the time, if I cut it down, though I leave it on the land, it is a breach of my co-

venant. So if I covenant to deliver so many yards of cloth, and I cut it in pieces, and then deliver it, it is a breach of my covenant, for the law reprobates all such evasions in fraud of that good faith, so essential to the welfare of society. So, as the design of this covenant was, to enforce the payment of the sum due from *Wood*, the finding of a less sum in obedience to the testimony of *Brooks*, opposed by the witnesses, and the Defendant's own acknowledgment, would be a departure from common honesty.

The recovery in this case has been resisted, on the ground that *Brooks* was agreed upon by the parties, as an arbitrator to decide upon the sum paid by him to *Wood*, and that his decision was to be conclusive upon the parties.

But the analogy strikes me as wholly imperfect; for arbitrators are called upon to exercise their judgment on the subject in dispute, to enable them to do which, they hear testimony, and decide upon the impression this made upon their minds, by the communication of knowledge from others. But here no judgment was necessary to be exercised; either one sum or the other had been paid to *Wood*, and it required only a simple effort of memory by *Brooks*, to ascertain which sum. If the name of the person returning the money had not been recollected, then the covenant would have bound *Wood* to pay the two hundred and sixty dollars or not, according as evidence should be given of his receiving the two hundred dollars.

Then the insertion of the name of *Brooks*, evidently made in the very reasonable expectation that he would remember correctly, and state truly, the real sum, cannot possibly change the nature of the contract. In principle, it resembles the case where a man says, "prove the debt, and I will pay you; or prove the debt by the person paying the money, and I will pay it." In either case, it would be competent for the Plaintiff to prove it

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on the trial of the action, and consequently, for the Defendant to introduce counter evidence. (1 *Comyn's. Dig.* 140.)

The cases in the Court of Equity, cited by the Defendant's counsel, proceed upon the principle, that there is to be an exercise of judgment by the person chosen by the parties to a contract. Thus if an agreement be made for a sale according to the valuation of two persons, one chosen by each party, the Court will not entertain a bill for specific performance, praying that the valuation should be otherwise ascertained. Why? Because the parties have confided to specific individuals, a confidence upon a subject interesting to them, respecting which those individuals are to exercise their judgment. The Court will not therefore, transfer to a stranger that confidence which was reposed in others, under a belief of their peculiar fitness to discharge the duty. This would be making another agreement for the parties, and not executing that which they had made. Upon the whole case, my opinion is, that the law has been rightly administered, and that there ought not to be a new trial.

Hall, Judge.—It has been argued, in this case, that the matter in dispute was agreed by the parties, to be referred to *James Brooks*, as an arbitrator. The parties considered *Brooks* a disinterested witness, as to a fact which was not known to the Plaintiff, but which was presumed to be known to the Defendant, and to *Brooks*, who had acted a part in it: he had paid the money to the Defendant, and for this reason he was referred to, as most likely to remember the amount paid. The party, however, had it in his power to prove the same fact by other witnesses. It appears that the amount due the Plaintiff, depended altogether upon the sum which had been returned to *Wood*, and that was within his knowledge; that balance was due immediately, and no credit was intended to be given for it. If *Brooks* had died, the

debt was still due, and recoverable as soon as the Plaintiff could make out his case; it was not at all dependant upon *Brooks* memory.

Suppose the Defendant *Wood*, the day after the covenant was signed, had acknowledged that he had received from *Brooks* two hundred dollars, would not *Brooks* have been dispensed with, and could not suit have been brought immediately? I think the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

HENDERSON, Judge, concurred.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

Joseph Davidson v. George Robinson. } From Iredell.

Commissioners appointed by an act of Assembly to lay off a town, sell the lots, and apply the proceeds to prescribed purposes, are not liable to the Treasurer of Public Buildings for a surplus undisposed of by the act.

ASSUMPSIT for money had and received to the use of the Plaintiff, as Treasurer of Public Buildings for the County of Iredell, brought upon the appeal of the Defendant, from a judgment rendered before his honor Judge NASH, upon a verdict for the Plaintiff, after discharging a rule for a new trial.

The cause was argued at this Term for the Defendant, by *J. Alexander; Wilson*, at a former Term, having submitted an argument for the Plaintiff.

The facts of the case are fully stated in the opinion of the Court, which was delivered by

HALL, Judge.—It seems not to be contended, that the Defendant has any right to the money in his hands, and for which he is sued in this action.

The question is, has the Plaintiff a right to recover it as Treasurer of public buildings?

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It appears from an act passed in the year 1788, (ch. 30) that certain land was set apart, on which the Town of Statesville was to be erected. The Defendant, with other Commissioners, were directed to divide it into lots, and make sale of them; out of the proceeds of such sale, a certain part was directed to be paid to the person from whom the land had been purchased, and the residue, if any, to be applied towards defraying the expense of laying off said town.

It seems that after defraying that expense, there is still a balance in the hands of the Defendant, respecting which the act is altogether silent.

It is necessary next to ascertain, whether the Plaintiff is entitled to recover it.

By an act passed in the year 1795, (*Rev. ch.* 433) Court-houses and gaols were directed to be built, or repaired in all the Counties; the County Courts were invested with power to lay and collect taxes for that purpose, and a treasurer of public buildings was directed to be appointed, whose duty it should be, to call to account and settle with all former Commissioners, who might have received county or district monies *for such purposes.*

In an act passed in the year 1797, (*Rev. ch.* 488) doubt is expressed, whether under the act last noticed, treasurers of public buildings were authorised to bring suits against former Commissioners, who might have county or district money in their hands, *for the purpose of repairing or erecting the public buildings,* and power is thereby given them to commence suits against any commissioners who may have such monies in their hands.

It is under these acts, that the Plaintiff claims to recover the money in dispute.

It is observable, that the Legislature pointed out the manner in which funds were to be raised for public buildings, the officers in whose hands they were to be deposited, and the duty of those officers. Amongst other things, it was made their duty to sue former Commissioners who

had in their hands county or district money, and who had received it for the purpose of repairing or erecting public buildings.

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There were no class of Commissioners, however, who held public money under the same circumstances with the Defendant; the acts do not speak of any such,—he was neither a commissioner nor treasurer of public buildings, nor was the money in his hands, by any act, appriated to that purpose. In truth, it appears to be unappropriated, and, however little *his* claim to it may be, I think the Plaintiff has no authority to sue for and recover it: he might as well sue for public money unappropriated, in the hands of any body else. I therefore think the rule for a new trial should be made absolute.

JUDGMENT REVERSED.

John Dick
v.
Allen Stoker, John Culpeper, sen. and Dempsey Honeycut. } From Montgomery.

To arrest and surrender the principal as agent of the bail, requires, at least, a *written* authority; but the principal may make a voluntary surrender of himself, without the agency or even knowledge of his bail, and placing himself in the power of the Sheriff, (though at the time under *moral* coercion,) for the purpose of being detained, is an effectual surrender by the principal to discharge the bail.

This was a *sci. fa.* against the Defendants, as bail of one *Cooper*. The Defendants pleaded several pleas, and among them, a surrender by them of their principal to the Sheriff; and on the trial before DANIEL Judge, the case turned wholly upon this last plea. In support of it, the Defendants examined *John Culpeper* the younger, who testified that when the Defendant, *Culpeper*, became bail for *Cooper*, the latter deposited with him sundry notes and judgments, as counter security; and the De-

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fendant being a member of Congress, and about to attend his duties in Washington, gave to the witness, *by parol*, a general authority to attend to and transact his business. At March term 1825, of Montgomery Superior Court, the Defendant being still absent in Congress, *Cooper* procured from the witness the notes and judgments, assuring him that he had settled the matter with the Plaintiff. During the same Court, the witness, becoming alarmed in consequence of a communication from the Defendant *Stoker*, took *Cooper* with him, went into the Court-House, called the Sheriff to him, stated that his father (the Defendant *Culpeper*,) was the bail of *Cooper*, and informed the Sheriff that he then surrendered *Cooper* to him. The Sheriff said, your father is secured, and left him. *Cooper* was then standing by his side, and very near him, and *Honeycut*, one of the Defendants, was at the time in the Court room, but whether in the same part of the room, the witness was unable to state. It also appeared in evidence, that *Cooper* immediately after went away, and the Sheriff sent persons in pursuit, who failed to arrest him.

His honor, the presiding Judge, charged the Jury, that as the Sheriff cannot arrest the principal, a surrender involves in it the putting the principal, by the bail, into the custody of the Sheriff; or arresting the principal, and offering him to the Sheriff in such manner that the Sheriff can secure him: But that if the bail use words importing a surrender, the principal being present, but not so offered to the Sheriff, the latter ought at the time, to object for that reason, else it will be a good surrender to discharge the bail, and charge the Sheriff. The Judge further instructed the Jury, that the authority given by law to the bail, to arrest the principal, cannot be communicated by the bail to another by parol: for this purpose a written deputation is necessary, in order that the authority of the agent to arrest, and of the Sheriff to detain, may appear with certainty;

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but that clearly, if an authority merely verbal be sufficient, it must be a special authority for that particular purpose, and cannot be deduced from a general agency to transact the business of the bail.

The Jury, under these instructions, found a verdict for the Plaintiff; and a motion for a new trial being made on the ground of misdirection, and overruled, the Defendant appealed.

In this Court no counsel appeared, and the opinion of the Court was delivered by HENDERSON, Judge.

If the principal is brought by a stranger, by physical force, and offered to be surrendered to the Sheriff, who receives him into his custody against the will of the principal, there is no doubt, I presume, but both the stranger and the Sheriff are trespassers, unless the stranger had an authority from the bail to make the arrest and surrender; and that authority should be given by writing at least. But the principal himself may, without the agency or knowledge of his bail, surrender himself, and the Sheriff is as much bound to receive him, as if surrendered by the bail. When, therefore, the principal comes into the presence, and places himself in the power of the Sheriff, with an intention of going into his custody, in discharge of his bail, and his purpose is made known to the Sheriff, either from his own lips or by the words of another, which he recognizes as evidencing his intention;—this amounts to as full a surrender as if the words declaring that intent had issued from his own mouth. The surrender becomes completely his own, and all pretence of charging the Sheriff as a trespasser, is taken away by his own voluntary act. I call the act *voluntary*, notwithstanding the moral force which the stranger may have used, to induce the principal to accompany him to the Sheriff for that purpose, such as persuasions, representations, and the like.

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I think that the Judge erred in passing over this view of the case, and presenting another, which did not arise until this was disposed of; for the Jury must necessarily have understood that the surrender amounted to nothing, unless young *Culpeper* had an authority in writing from his father. There should, therefore, be a new trial.

JUDGMENT REVERSED.

Arthur Butler and others,
v.
Robert Godley, adm'r. of Mary Godley, dec'd. } From Beaufort.

A man cannot hold *in trust* for himself;—therefore, when a negro slave was conveyed to A in trust, for A for life, with remainders over—*Held*, that the whole interests vested in A absolutely, and the limitations over could not take effect.

In July 1792, *Elias Godley* and others, heirs of *Nathan Godley*, entered into a written agreement with *Mary Godley*, his widow, by which it was recited, that the said *Nathan* had by his will made no provision for his widow, and that she had taken the same into consideration, and that it had been mutually agreed between the parties that she should receive from the heirs a negro girl named *Lucy*, for her natural life, in full satisfaction of her dower and other interest in her husband's estate, real and personal:—and the heirs in consideration thereof, covenanted as follows—"to furnish the negro within eighteen months, and a good and lawful title to make unto the said *Mary*, during the term of her natural life, and after her death to go to her daughter *Betsey Godley Butler*, if living, and to the heirs of her body lawfully begotten, if any; but in case of the death of the said *Betsey*, before the death of her mother, then *Mary* her mother to keep possession during her natural life, then it is the true intent and meaning hereof, that the said negro return to the said heirs of the said *Nathan Godley*, deceased," &c.

In September 1793, *Elias Godley* and others, the Executors and heirs of the said *Nathan* deceased, executed a deed, (written on the same sheet with the agreement) the material part of which is as follows: "we have on the day of the date, *delivered* to *Mary Godley, upon trust,* for the purposes in the annexed agreement, a certain negro girl named *Lucy;* which said negro girl aforesaid, for the purposes assigned in the annexed agreement, and for the consideration therein set forth, that is to say, *Mary Godley's* part of *Nathan Godley's* estate, her deceased husband, we the said *Elias Godley,* &c. do by these presents oblige ourselves to *covenant and forever defend upon trust,* unto the said *Mary Godley,* the said negro girl *Lucy* and her increase, for and during her natural life, and after the death of the said *Mary Godley, upon trust* unto *Betsey Godley Butler* for and during her natural life, should she die without issue; but in case of marriage and her having lawful issue [illegible] named parties, do bind ourselves to warrant and forever defend the said girl *Lucy* unto the said [illegible] according to *the true intent and meaning of the annexed agreement.*"

Betsey Godley Butler died unmarried, without issue, in the life of her mother; and after the death of the mother, this petition was exhibited by her next of kin claiming distribution of the said *Lucy* and her issue, and an account of their hire, as being a part of the personal estate of the said *Mary,* subject to distribution.

The case was heard in the Court below, at Spring Term 1825, before BADGER Judge, who declared that by the two instruments taken together, the *whole legal estate* in the slaves passed to *Mary Godley, in trust,* for herself for life, remainder to *Betsey G. Butler,* but in case of the death of *Betsey* during the life of her mother, then *in trust* for *Elias Godley* and the other covenantors and grantors in the said instruments; and that, consequently, the Defendant held in trust for them, and not for the next of kin of *Mary Godley.* The Judge there-

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upon ordered the petition to be dismissed, with costs; and the petitioners appealed.

This case was argued at June Term last, by *Gaston* for the petitioners, and *Hogg* contra; but the present reporters are not in possession of any note of the argument. The Court took time to consider, and now, at this term, the Judges being divided, the opinion of a majorty of the Court was delivered by

HENDERSON, Judge.—If a legal estate passed to *Mary Godley* by the deeds in question, the limitations after her life estate are void, and the whole interest vested in her. To me it is incomprehensible how a person can take to the use of, or in trust for himself; that he should be his own trustee; that he should have a right to call upon himself to perform the use or trust, and if refused, enforce performance. So far from such an union being recognized in law, it is a well established maxim, that if the two interests become vested in the same person, the use or trust immediately vanishes;—it does not exist for a moment. It is true, that where there is a sole corporation as a Parson or a Bishop, the individual, the sole corporation may hold in one capacity to the use of or in trust for the other, and there is an unsatisfactory attempt made, to make a tenant in fee, hold for himself in tail; but this is upon the ground that there are two persons, the one natural, the other artificial, and it was attempted to be shewn that a tenant in tail is an artificial person, created by the statute *de donis:* but this shews, that it is upon the idea that there are two persons, that the two interests are supported. I must therefore discard the idea entirely, that *Mary Godley* held in trust for herself, and afterwards in trust for ulterior remainders.

That she took but a trust estate, her legal estate remaining in the grantors, appears to me to be also untenable. I will lay out of the case the contract of 1792, whereby the grantors bound themselves to purchase a

negro girl and to limit her to *Mary Godley* for life, and afterwards to her daughter, farther than it is referred to, and its provisions by such express reference incorporated into the latter deed. The words of the deed of 1793 are, that they, the grantors, (naming them) have on *that* day delivered to *Mary Godley*, for the *purposes* declared in the annexed agreement, the negro *Lucy* for the consideration therein set forth; they then severally warrant the said girl *upon trust* to said *Mary Godley*, for life, and after her death to her daughter, &c.; and the question is, does the legal estate pass to *Mary Godley* for life, or does it remain in the grantors: if the legal estate passes, the limitations are void; if it remain in the grantors, and nothing but a trust passes, the trust is good. There are no words passing only a trust and retaining the legal estate; they deliver to her upon trust for the purposes of the annexed deed: that deed declares that they shall within eighteen months procure a negro of a certain description, and a good and lawful *title* to the said negro *make* to the said *Mary*, during the term of her natural life, and after death to her daughter, &c. Who are to perform the trusts, if there are any? The grantors? None are pointed out for them to perform; *they* are not to hold the negro in trust for *Mary Godley*, but *Mary Godley* is to hold upon trust. They did no grant the trust (the beneficial estate only) to her, retaining the legal one themselves; but they gave the legal estate to her, and on her imposed the trusts. What were those trusts? The only ones expressed are, that she would hold the negro, during her own life, and that after death, the negro should go to her daughter, and return to the grantors if the daughter should die before the death of her mother. Were I to presume, I should say these were the ideas intended to be conveyed by the term "*in trust.*" But allowing that the person who drew this deed, had the idea, that, by means of a trust growing out of a legal estate, these future and contin-

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gent limitations of personal property could be made, and intended to draw such a deed as would effect that object, if he has not done so, we cannot do it for him. No matter what he or the parties intended, we must decide the right of these parties upon what has been done, and not on what he intended to do. Is there a valid trustee to hold and preserve the legal estate, until these future trusts arise? for it is upon that ground, and that ground only, that these future trusts can be supported. If there were any trusts declared, it was upon *Mary Godley's* legal estate, and not upon the estate of the grantors, and they were to her in the first instance, and if so, they vanished in a moment, and they will not arise again and fix on the estate after her death. I am constrained, therefore, to say that *Mary Godley* took the whole estate, and that upon her death, the petitioners are entitled as her next of kin, she having died intestate.

Let the Judgment of the Superior Court be reversed, and the cause remanded, with instructions that the Superior Court proceed in the cause.

HALL, Judge, *dissentiente.* If the title to the negro girl passed to *Mary Godley*, the petitioners are entitled to recover: nor will I deny, that if she has the legal title, in trust for herself, during her life, they are entitled to recover; but the deed is drawn in too questionable a shape, to admit of clearness and certainty. The words are, that they "*delivered to Mary Godley, upon trust,* for the purposes in the annexed agreement, a certain negro girl," &c.; the words, *upon trust,* seem to distinguish this deed from those commonly used to convey the property itself; it was not intended that she should hold the property as in common cases; and I think, where a doubt exists, as in this case, and two constructions may be placed on a deed, one of which would be against law, so as not to answer the end proposed, and the other is conformable to it, the latter ought to be adopted. Now if

we consider *Mary Godley* as only having a trust interest in the property, from the words, "*delivered to her upon trust*," &c. the object in view will be accomplished. But if we adopt the other construction, and give her the legal title by those words, the object of the parties will be frustrated. The petitioners were never intended to be benefited by the conveyance; where then it is stated that the negro girl was *delivered to her upon trust*, I must understand it to mean, that she had a trust estate, in contradistinction from a legal estate, and that the legal interest did not pass. I therefore think the petition should be dismissed.

By a majority of the Court, the Judgment was

REVERSED.

Officers and others,
v.
Hanan & Zealous Taylor.
} From Nash.

Where a suit abates by the death of one of the parties, each party is liable for his own costs.

An action had been pending in this Court, in which one *Dempsey Taylor* was the Plaintiff, and *Hanan & Zealous Taylor* were the Defendants—*Dempsey* died, and in consequence of his death, the action abated some terms ago, and the Defendants took out letters on his estate.

At last term, *Badger*, on behalf of the officers of the Court below, and of the witnesses who had attended in that Court, obtained a rule upon the Defendants in their own right, and also as administrators of *Dempsey Taylor*, to show cause why execution should not issue against them for costs. And at this term, the rule coming on to be heard,

The COURT said, where a cause abates by the death of one of the parties, as there is no judgment for costs

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each party remains liable to pay his own, and execution may issue therefor, at the instance of the officers, and others, who have rendered their services and are unpaid. Let execution issue against the Defendants *de bonis propriis* for their own proper costs, and *de bonis intestati*, for the costs of their intestate.

RULE MADE ABSOLUTE.

The President and Directors of the State Bank
v.
Henry B. Hunter, Executor of Henry Hunter, Peter Evans, and Gray Little.
} From Edgecombe.

Taking interest in advance by a Bank, upon discounting a negotiable security, though payable directly to the Bank, is not usurious.

Deducting interest for the days of grace, upon discounting a bond, is not usurious, though the obligee is not entitled to the days of grace, the parties supposing that on such an instrument he was entitled.

A new trial is matter of discretion, and the refusal to grant one cannot be assigned as error. The Supreme Court is a Court of Errors in Law, and the case stated by the Judge, is a substitute in our practice for a bill of exceptions. Hence, this Court cannot grant a new trial because the Judge below refused one, for that refusal is not error; but where the Court below errs, as in receiving evidence, instructing the Jury or the like, this Court orders a *venire de novo*, as a means of correcting such error.

THE Plaintiffs declared in debt on a single bond executed by *Henry Hunter*, *Peter Evans* and *Gray Little*, for 3870 dollars, payable to the Plaintiffs, dated December 28th 1819, and due eighty-eight days thereafter; to which the Defendants pleaded usury.

On the trial, the Cashier of the Bank proved that the bond was offered by *Henry Hunter*, and discounted for his benefit, fourteen days after its date; that it was the universal practice of the Bank, on discounting bonds, to take interest in advance on the whole amount; that

when a bond was made payable at eighty-eight days after its date, and was discounted on the day of its date, interest for ninety-two days was deducted, and that the interest was calculated at the rate of one per cent. for sixty days, according to *Rowlett's Tables*, which were formed upon the supposition, that the year consisted of only three hundred and sixty days; that interest was calculated on the bond in question, according to the above principles, for seventy-eight days. He stated that before the discount of this bond, he was aware that the principles upon which the tables were formed, gave a greater rate of interest than six per centum per annum, but as the book had been long used in the Bank, before his appointment, he adhered to its use, believing the mode of calculation to be lawful; that the tables were used for the sake of accuracy and dispatch, and from no other motive.

This witness also proved, that the bond had been offered by *Hunter* in renewal of one for the same amount, dated June 22d 1819, and payable eighty-eight days thereafter; the last in renewal of a former one, dated Feb. 16th 1819, also payable at eighty-eight days, and so on in a course of renewals; that all these were discounted on the days of their dates, in the manner and upon the principles above mentioned; that frequently, *Hunter* on renewing, did not pay in cash, the difference between the net proceeds of the new bond, and the amount of the old one, and as the Bank never received partial payments, the settlement was sometimes postponed for days, weeks and even months, and when made, interest was taken on the old bond from its maturity, without regarding the discount of the new one.

The witness also proved, that in discounting bonds, the Directors of the Bank discriminated between those offered for renewal and new ones, but whenever a discount was made, the proceeds of the bond were credited to the person for whose benefit it was offered, and were

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not applied to the old note, or to any other purpose, without his check; that *Hunter* often complained of the mode adopted in settling the old bonds, as injurious and oppressive; that these complaints were represented to the Directors, who ordered the witness to persist in it. He stated that the Bank allowed three days of grace on every bond; that the reason of taking discount for ninety-two days, was to make the renewals take place on the same day of the week; that the Board met every Monday night, the bonds offered were usually dated as of the next day, and the proceeds of those discounted, were passed to the credit of the offerer, on the morning of Tuesday, and were subject to his order on that day; and that although the proceeds of bonds offered for renewal, passed to the credit of the offerer, yet they could only be applied to the payment of the old bond.

A witness was examined, who had formerly been Cashier, who agreed with the other witness as to the custom of the Bank in discounting, and the manner of calculating; but he stated the reason why ninety-two days interest was taken, was this,—that the time the bond had to run, was estimated as eighty-eight days, exclusive of the day of its date, and as the borrower had the use of the money on that day, the time of the loan was eighty-nine days besides the days of grace.

His honor Judge Paxton, instructed the Jury, that deducting the interest at the time of making the discount, supposing the interest was calculated on proper principles, was not usurious. That it was usurious to calculate the interest according to *Rowlet's* tables, the officers being aware of the principle of calculation adopted in those tables, and that their supposition that this mode was lawful, made no difference—that a corrupt agreement means any agreement which violates the statute, and that although a mistake in fact, as a miscalculation upon a right principle, is not usurious, yet a calculation upon a wrong principle, however innocently made, is

usurious. And that, in this case, if it was the intent to take interest at a rate greater than that allowed by law, through ignorance, it was a corrupt intent within the statute. That receiving interest on the old note up to the time of settlement, if the new note carried interest only from that time, was not usurious; but if interest was calculated on the old note up to the time of settlement, from its maturity, and interest was also reserved out of the new note for the same time, it was usurious.

That as to the days of grace, if the Defendants had the use of the money for ninety-two days, and legal interest only was calculated for that time, it was not usurious.

The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, and assessed the damages to $1615,72. A rule for a new trial was obtained by the Defendants, upon the grounds that the verdict was contrary to law and to evidence, and that the Jury had been misdirected by the Judge. His honor informed the counsel for the Plaintiff, that the verdict would be set aside, and a new trial granted, unless the excess of interest was remitted. The Plaintiff then remitted three hundred and fifty dollars "the excess aforesaid," whereupon the rule was discharged, and judgment rendered for the Plaintiffs, from which the Defendants appealed.

Gaston, for the Defendants.—I. The verdict is against law, the bond being usurious for the reasons assigned by the Judge, and as the Jury did not find according to the law, as laid down in his charge, it was his duty to set aside the verdict and grant a new trial. The Jury set the law at defiance, the Judge knew it and permitted it. He ought not to have entered up judgment for the sum *said* to be due, as principal and interest. This Court can see his error and ought to correct it.

1. It is usurious to calculate interest upon the supposition, that ninety days is the fourth of a year. (*Revised code* 139, *ditto* 1178.) The belief of the officers of the

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Bank, that they had a right thus to calculate, can have no operation; it was not a mistake of fact, but a misconception of right. In *March* v. *Martindale*, (3 *B. & P.* 154) the Jury found that the Plaintiff did not intend to violate the statute, yet the Court upon the facts, inferred that the transaction was usurious. (*Firemen Insurance Co.* v. *Sturges*, 2 *Cowan* 664, *same* v. *Eli & Parsons*, 2 *Cowan* 678, 704, *Bank of Utica* v. *Wager* 2 *Cowan* 712, *same* v. *Smally*, 2 *Cowan* 770.)

2. It was usurious to take interest for the same time on both notes. There was in fact but one debt, for which both notes were security; this was the understanding of the parties, and by the mode adopted, 12 per cent. is taken upon this debt. The pretence, that the proceeds of the new note had been passed to the credit of *Hunter*, is unfounded, he could not use them, they could only be applied in discharge of the old note. If it should be alleged that this usury does not affect the new note, the answer is, that in truth no loan was made until the day of settlement, for not until then, did *Hunter* derive any benefit from the discount, the proceeds were not received as a partial payment, and he could not draw them out of the Bank. There was no forbearance, no discount, until they had been applied to the discharge of the old one. If the proceeds had been applied as a payment of the old note at once, or had been placed at the disposal of *Hunter*, the transaction would not have been usurious. (*Hutchinson* v. *Piper*, 4 *Tuun.* 810.)

3. The verdict is illegal, and this illegality is apparent upon the record. The verdict is for the principal of the bond and six per cent. upon it, from its maturity; there is then, no excess of interest, unless the bond itself covered much excess. The Judge declared, that he would grant a new trial, unless the excess of interest is remitted, "whereupon the Plaintiffs do remit of record 350 dollars the excess aforesaid." The fact then is indubitable, is admitted of record, that the bond in suit, to which usury is pleaded, secures an excess of interest.

Until this fact is justified, the law presumes that the excess is usurious; (*Revised code* 189, *Roberts* v. *Trenayne Gro. Jas.* 507, 3 *Ser. & Law.* 45 *note*, 2 *Cowan* 705) precisely as where a killing is established, malice is presumed. Had a special verdict found, that this bond secured an amount of interest, exceeding that authorised by law, the law without explanation, presumes it to be usurious; here, there is no explanation, no defence or excuse, the naked fact appears, and is by the Plaintiff entered of record. The Judge therefore erred in refusing a new trial, and entering up judgment for the Plaintiffs.

It is the clear right and undoubted duty of a Judge, to set aside a verdict when the Jury perversely, corruptly, and ignorantly find against law, and unless this duty be faithfully performed, there is an end to law in the administration of justice. The Judges are appointed specially to administer the law, which must be uniform in its operations: Jurors are not competent to decide such questions, being a fluctuating body, without the necessary learning or experience to determine abstract principles. Without the exercise of this power by the Judge, there can be no remedy even for corruption in the Jury, since an attaint no longer lies, and in this country, where the Judge is prohibited from intimating an opinion on the evidence, a liberal exercise of this corrective power, is peculiarly necessary. Whenever, therefore, a verdict is against law, it ought to be set aside. (*Grant* v. *Vaughan*, 3 *Burr*, 1523, 1526. *Ward* v. *Gunston*, 2 *do.* 894. *Tindal* v. *Brown*, 1 *D. & E.* 168. *Wilkes* v. *Coffield*, 3 *Hawks*, 28. 5 *S. & L.* 425. 1 *John. Cases*, 184, 336. *Wilkie* v. *Roosevelt*, 3 *do.* 66, 206.) The necessity of this is obvious, for if error be committed in rendering a judgment, it may be reviewed, but if a Jury disregard the law and find a verdict against it, the only remedy is a new trial.

The Judge also erred in supposing that the Plaintiffs by remitting the usurious interest, freed their case of

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injustice, and thereby making the equity of the case coincide with the verdict, rendered his interference unnecessary. For the law vacates the contract, but the Judge, though a minister of the law, and bound to avoid the contract, made himself wiser than the law, and gave it validity for all except the excess of interest. In doing this, he was led astray by a supposed analogy to the rules of Chancery, when application is made to it for relief. But the analogy fails entirely: an application for a new trial is to the *legal* discretion of the Judge; a Chancellor acts upon the *conscience* of the applicant. In this case, the Judge was called upon to pronounce on a legal defence, not to prevent an unconscientious use of a legal advantage. Although Courts of Equity do not relieve unless the debtor pays the principal and legal interest, yet the ground of the practice is not that they consider the Defendant as entitled to the money, but because the Plaintiff has waived the penalties of the statute. (3 *S. & L.* 99 *note.*)

The Judge might have thought that the parties were in *pari delicto*, and as the Plaintiffs had the advantage, he would not deprive them of it; but this is not true, the borrower is considered as the oppressed party, and the object of the statute is to protect the necessitous and prevent their becoming victims to extortion and injustice. (6 *John. Chan. Rep.* 100. *Jones* v. *Berkley*, *Doug.* 698. *Smith* v. *Bramley*, *do.* 696 *note.* *Bosanquet* v. *Dashwood*, *Cases Temp. Tal.* 37.) This is peculiarly the case where the contest is between a vast monied institution and an humble individual.

4. This Court ought to correct the errors of the Judge below: the act of 1818, (*Revised Code*, 1434,) equires of them to inspect the whole record, and to rnder thereon such a judgment as ought to have been rendered in the Court below. Upon this record, it appears that an action of debt was brought, the statute of usury was pleaded, that certain principles of law were

laid down by the Judge; the Defendants allege that the Jury have found a verdict contrary to law; the Judge, declining to decide this question, and assuming a character not given him by law, says he will not grant a new trial if the Plaintiffs will release the excessive interest; this is done, and judgment is rendered for the residue. It appears then, upon the face of the record, that the verdict is against law, and as the Judge below ought to have set it aside, upon his refusal to do so, this Court will correct the error. It appears as clearly to this Court as it did to the Court below, is not affected by any enquiry as to the credit to be given to the testimony, and may as well be acted on here as any where. Whenever it appears that a party has not had the full benefit of a rule of law, this Court redresses him. (*Love* v. *Wall*, 1 *Hawks*, 315. *Tate* v. *Southard*, *do.* 45. *Sneed* v. *Creath*, *do.* 309. *Reel* v. *Reel*, 2 *do.* 63.) As in cases where a new trial is moved for and no case made up, this Court grants one. (*State* v. *Powers*, 3 *Hawks*, 376. *Anderson* v. *Hunt*, *do.* 244. *Hamilton* v. *M'Culloch*, 2 *do.* 29.) But it may be said, that an application for a new trial is to the discretion of a Judge, and that being an exercise of discretion, his decision cannot be reviewed. It is true, that they are within the discretion of the Judge, but this discretion means, not the whim of a Judge, but a legal discretion; it is his duty *discernere per legem quid sit justum*, and there must be a legal rule for the government of this discretion, otherwise *jus est vagum*.

There are many cases of discretionary powers, the exercise of which this Court cannot revise; but the reason is that the Court here, cannot see the facts as they happened in the Court below. In this case, however, the Court must see that the discretionary power of the Judge has been abused. The whole results in this, that this Court is appointed to examine the decisions of the Courts below, and if upon the whole record it appears

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that injustice has been done, they will interfere. So where this Court sees upon the record that a Judge below has refused to exercise his legal discretion, either, by not knowing he possessed any, or by a mistake in its application, this Court revises and corrects. (*Wellborne* v. *Younger*, 2 *Hawks*, 208. *Clarke* v. *Blount*, *do.* 208. *Cherry* v. *Slade*, 2 *do.* 400. *Williams* v. *Averett*, 3 *do.* 308.) It may be said that substantial justice has been done by the Judge, and therefore this Court will not set aside the verdict. But how is justice to be ascertained except by the law of the land, the only measure of right? The question is, not whether justice has been done, but whether the law has been properly administered.

II. The Judge erred in charging the Jury, that to take the interest in advance, on the nominal amount of the bond, was not usurious. The lending is only of the nett proceeds, but the interest taken is for the amount of the principal and interest. By this mode of calculation, on a loan of 1000 dollars for ninety days, the sum forborne is only 985 dollars, whereas the interest taken, is that due for 1000 dollars.

This mode is directly against the words of the act of 1749, which forbids, by way of discount or interest, the taking of more than at the rate of six per cent. per annum on the sum loaned. This is the general rule, and the Plaintiffs must shew some established exception.—(*Barnes* v. *Worlish*, *Cro. Jas.* 26—*Bank of Utica* v. *Wager*, 2 *Cowan* 766, *Savages opinion*—*Manhattan Co.* v. *Osgood*, 15 *John.* 162, 9 *Mass. R.* 49—*Fleckner* v. *Bank of the United States*, 8 *Wheat.* 338, 3 *Wils.* 262—*Worleys case*, *Moore* 644—1 *Bulstrode* 20—*Loyd* v. *Williams*, 2 *Blk. R.* 792.) The only exception to this rule, is the purchase of a bill of exchange or promisory note, where discount may be taken. *March* v. *Martindale*, (3 *B. and P.* 154—*Ord. on usury*, 53 *to* 59—*Cowp.* 709 766—3 *S. and L.* 95.) It is not however pretended, that this case

is, within the exception, the lending is direct, and a *bond* is taken as the security.

There is also error in that part of the charge, as to the days of grace. The usage proved is certainly usurious, and the charge amounts to an approval of that usage. It is questionable, whether interest can be taken for days of grace, upon a promissory note; but on a *bond*, grace is not demandable. (*Jarvis* v. *McMain*, 8 *Hawks*, 10.) The Bank could commence suit on the day the bond became due. In law, they contracted to forbear but eighty-eight days, and on this contract, deducted interest for ninety-two days, which is more than the rate of six per cent. per annum, (*Cowp.* 766.) Supposing however, that three days of grace belong to this instrument, where is the shadow of right to charge four? According to the evidence of the first witness, four days were deducted, to make the renewals take place on the same day of the week; but thirteen weeks, is ninety-one days, when the note is either paid or renewed. According to the second witness, the fourth day is charged because the borrower, has the use of the money on the day it is lent, and also on the day when he is to repay it. But he gets it within the banking hours of one day, and is to pay it within those of another; then is there no difference between this case and an ordinary loan, and every debtor has the use of the money borrowed on the day he gets it, and has the whole of the last day to make payment.

Badger, for the Plaintiffs.—We claim nothing against the Defendants, because they are "humble individuals" and in this Court, nothing to which we are entitled, will be denied us, because the Plaintiffs are "a vast monied corporation." Considerations of this sort may gain attention elsewhere, but are urged here to no purpose.

I. A new trial will not be awarded by this Court, on the ground that the verdict was contrary to law, for

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1st. The Judge was right in refusing a new trial.—The counsel on the other side admits that this is matter of discretion, but it is contended that the discretion is legal, and is to be exercised not upon the equity or conscience of the cause but its *legal* merits; this is certainly erroneous. Lord *Mansfield* informs us in the case cited from 1 *Burrough*, that parties were formerly forced into Equity to obtain new trials, because of the strictness of Courts of law; hence the latter Courts relaxed into greater liberality to save the parties this tedious and expensive remedy, and Sir *Wm. Blackstone* says, that a new trial is not granted in cases of strict right or *summum jus*, where the rigorous exaction of extreme *legal* justice is hardly reconcileable to *conscience*, (3 *Bl. Com.* 392.) All the cases accord with the view of those Judges.

Where *substantial* justice has been done, a new trial will not be granted, though the Judge mistake the law, (*Edwards* v. *Mitchell*, 2 *T. R.* 4) nor will it be granted, though the verdict be against the strict rule of law, or obtained through surprize, in order to give a second chance of success to a hard action, or unconscionable defence. (*Farewell* v. *Chaffey*, 1 *Burr.* 54—*Smith* v. *Branson*, *Salk.* 644.) So, where the verdict is conformable to the *real justice, conscience, and equity* of the case, though against law. (*Wilkinson* v. *Payne*, 4 *T. R.* 468—*Deerly* v. *Mazarine*, *Salk.* 646—*Burton* v. *Thompson*, 2 *Burr.* 664—*Marsh* v. *Bower*, 2 *Bl. R.* 851—*Ravely* v. *Mainwairing*, 3 *Burr.* 1306—*Macrow* v. *Hale*, 1 *Burr.* 11.) So where the verdict is not supportable in law, according to the pleadings, but is on the honest side of the cause, or if the same effect might be had in other proceedings at law or in equity. (2 *Wilson* 302, 2 *Burr.* 936, *Cowper* 597, 2 *Bl. R.* 1221.) And so in our own Courts, where in a hard action, the Defendant, whose conduct had been *bona fide* under a practise general, but not consonant to law, had obtained a verdict, it was held that it ought not to be set aside, though the Judge who

tried the cause, had misdirected the Jury in matter of law. (*Tagert* v. *Hill*, *Tayl. R.* 277–312–313.)

In all these cases, it is evident that the terms "equity," "justice," "conscience" and "honesty," are used in opposition to strict law, and presuppose that the *legal* justice of the case was against the verdict, and the *substantial* justice with it. Whether natural equity, or the artificial system administered in Courts of Equity be intended, is immaterial, for either sense is conclusive against the position assumed on the other side. There can be no difficulty in ascertaining that in this case, the verdict is on the honest side of the cause.

The Judge did not err in supposing, that on this question he was to exercise a discretion, governed by equitable principles, notwithstanding the attempt made, to distinguish this case from an application to a Court of Equity for relief against a judgment at law, on an usurious contract. It is said the verdict is to be set aside because it is *illegal*, but the Chancellor relieves against the judgment, not because it is illegal, but because it is unconscientious in the party to use it. A verdict not responsive to the issues, insensible or otherwise imperfect on the face of the record, is indeed illegal; and it is error to render judgment on such a verdict; but where the verdict is perfect in form, and will warrant a judgment, it cannot with any propriety, be called illegal, though it may be inequitable or unconscientious. In the former case, a *venire de novo* is awarded as matter of *right*, and always was, before new trials were known; in the latter case, the Court may award a new trial as matter of favor only; a judgment entitles the party to execution, and a verdict perfect in its frame, entitles the party as of course, to sign judgment. An application to a Court of Equity, to relieve against the judgment, and to a Court of Law, to set aside the verdict; each seek to deprive the opposite party of a legal advantage. Of this he will not, in either Court be deprived, when he may

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with a safe conscience use it, which he certainly may, when the real justice of the case is on his side.

2. If the Judge was wrong, this Court cannot revise his decision. His mistake, if there was one, was not *error* in law: there can be no error unless there be a violation of some rule of law, prescribing what the Judge should do, and giving the party a right to demand it. Discretion implies that there is no rule of law; for the instant a rule is given, discretion ceases, and the Judge is bound to obey. (*Armstrong* v. *Wright*, 1 *Hawks*, 93.) But a new trial is both shewn and admitted to be matter of discretion, and consequently, to refuse one, is an exercise of discretion, and cannot be error. This has been expressly decided by the Supreme Court of the U. S. (6 *Cranch*. 217.) and in no case has it ever been supposed by counsel, much less decided by the Court, that such refusal could be assigned for error. In England, plainly it cannot, for the statute of Westminster, which gives the bill of exceptions, provides that the party may except to the opinion of the Judge or Court at the trial, and the bill containing the exceptions being signed, the cause is removed by writ of error into an appellate Court. As soon as the bill is signed, the power of the former Court ceases; no new trial is or can be moved or granted there, but the latter Court, if the Judge below has erred at the trial, award a *venire de novo*, in order to correct that error. (3 *Bl. Com.* 372, *Tidd*. 791.)

But this Court is strictly a Court of errors in law. The act of 1799, ch. 4. directs a meeting of the Judges "to consider and determine all questions of *law*," arising and reserved on the circuits, and directs that a statement of the points reserved, made by the Judge on the circuit, or by the counsel under his direction, should be sent up. Various acts were afterwards passed, altering the form and style of this meeting of the Judges, and allowing appeals, but still confining the jurisdiction under all its forms to legal questions. And the act establishing

this Court transfers to it the same jurisdiction, only directing it to re-examine all questions arising upon the record, instead of confining the examination to points made below as the old Court did, but leaving the nature of these questions unaltered. The mode of preparing the case, derived from the act of 1799, was continued under all the modifications of our appellate tribunal, and is in lieu of a bill of exceptions. What cannot be assigned for error upon the latter, cannot be noticed as error when appearing in the former—and whatever could be thus assigned for error is, in our practice, considered as excepted to by the party injured thereby.

That this Court is strictly a Court of Errors, is further apparent from own its decisions, for though the Court may, in some instance through inadvertence, have interfered in matters of discretion, yet it has solemnly and repeatedly decided, that it can revise only the errors in law of the Courts below. (*Matlock* v. *Gray and Harper*, 4 *Hawks* 18—*Bank of Newbern* v. *Pugh*, 3 *Hawks* 392, *and Armstrong* v. *Wright*, before cited.)

But further, the Judge was wrong in instructing the Jury that the calculation by the Tables of *Rowlett* was usurious; these tables have been generally adopted for many years, by merchants, banks and men of business, throughout the United States, and the mode of calculation pursued universally, in taking verdicts in our Courts of justice. This consideration is sufficient to sustain the practice, notwithstanding the cases cited from *Cowen*.

The Judge was also wrong in stating that the calculation of interest on the old note up to the time of settlement, was usurious. The two notes were distinct and separate contracts in law and in fact. The proceeds of the new note belonged to the offerer, and might be applied to any purpose by his check, except to make a partial payment which the bank was not bound to receive. Had the Bank refused to pay his check, it would have

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been a denial of a right, but not usury. It is merely the ordinary case of mutual demands, one, certain and carrying interest, the other, uncertain and without interest; there no doubt, the real debt is the difference, but interest may be charged on the one side, though none be allowed on the other. This may be harsh, it may, perhaps, be oppressive, but it is not usurious. The Jury therefore, if they found against the charge, did not find against law.

II. The Judge was right in instructing the Jury that taking interest in advance and for ninety-two days, was not usurious.

1. In England, a banker may take interest in advance on discounting a bill, such discount being in the usual course of business, though he thereby receive more than five per cent. (2 *Bl. Rep.* 793—*March* v. *Martindale*, 3 *Bos. & Pul.* 154.) But it is said, this is allowed to cover the expense of remittance and not as interest, and *Hammett* v. *Yea*, is cited. That was a case where the banker paid the proceeds on discounting a bill, not in cash, but in drafts on London, payable thirty days after date; and the question was, if this was not usury, because the banker advanced nothing, the drafts not being convertible into cash, until they fell due. But the Court held that the benefit the banker derived from paying in drafts, which had a short time to run, should be referred to his expense and trouble in remitting funds to London, to meet them when due. But it was not doubted for a moment, that a banker discounting a bill for cash, is entitled to interest in advance, and receives the benefit of such deduction as interest. It is further objected, that this exception is in England, confined to bills of exchange. The true principle adopted there, is that in doing business in negotiable paper, according to the usual course of trade, interest may be lawfully taken in advance: it does not extend to bonds, for they are not negotiable, nor to notes &c. payable directly to

the banker, because it is not usual for bankers to deal in such notes. But here, bonds are by statute made negotiable, and have become commercial securities, and the general course of business is, to discount such bonds payable directly to the Bank.

The English Judges found the practice of taking interest in advance universally established, and they refused to declare it wrong, because thereby every banker in England would be guilty of usury, and all the securities in their hands avoided. The Supreme Court of New-York have sanctioned the practice in *Manhattan Co.* v. *Osgood*, and for the same reason. The same opinion has been given by the Supreme Court of the United States, of Pennsylvania, and of Massachusetts.

It is said, these were cases of discounting bills, and not of loans, and that the exception extends to the former only. This is a mistake, they are cases of loans strictly, else the question could not have arisen, for the purchase of a pre-existing bill in market, is completely out of the statute, and may be purchased at any discount. In the *Manhattan Co.* v. *Osgood*, the note was drawn and indorsed with the express purpose of obtaining a loan for the accommodation of the maker, by discounting it with the Plaintiff. If it be in fact a loan, the form of the security can make no difference, the statute forbidding excessive usury upon all loans without reference to the manner by which repayment is secured. What may be lawfully done in loaning money upon a note made and endorsed with a view to obtain and secure such loan, may be done also upon a bond made payable directly to the lender, with the same view.

The case before the Court is even stronger in support of the practice adopted by the bank, than were the cases referred to in England and New-York. The same mode of taking interest has prevailed in all our banks. If this bond is void for this reason, the whole debt due to the Bank is annihilated, and no security is left them but

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the honor of the debtors; how feeble is that security, the names united in the defence of the present action, abundantly shew. The Court cannot look with indifference upon the evils to result from the decision asked on the other side; the bank insolvent, its stockholders ruined, the revenue of the state nearly destroyed, and all our citizens who hold the notes of the banks, received in payment for their produce and their labor, finding them at once converted in their hands into worthless rags.—These evils, appalling in their nature, and incalculable in extent, are a just motive for judicial decision, and have been so considered, by the most able and virtuous Judges in England and in this country—Judges, like all other functionaries, must realize that public safety, is the supreme law, and nothing can either require or justify such a construction of a statute as sacrifices the welfare of the whole community, for whose benefit the statute was enacted. General good is the end, and the provisions of the enactment but the means of accomplishing that end. When it is seen that these provisions, if strictly applied, tend to general ruin, the expounder of the law cannot so apply them; for by that application, he fixes upon the law-maker, the greatest of all absurdities, that of esteeming the means of more consequence than the end, for effecting which alone, had the means any value.—This reasoning applies with equal force, to the calculation by *Rowlett's* Tables, which are in the most general use, and have in practice, the sanction of the whole community on their side.

2. Deducting interest for the ninety-two days, was not usurious. The bonds were separate and distinct contracts, and not different securities under one contract for a loan, and the Bank was not obliged in any way to renew. Their practice to accept renewals was merely gratuitous, was no stipulation in any contract, and might be discontinued at pleasure. They had then a right to take interest for the day of the loan, and of

its repayment inclusive, whether that repayment was in a new note or in cash. The bond had to run eighty-eight days *after* its date, that is, exclusive of the day of its date, but the borrower had the use of the money on that day, which made a forbearance for eighty-nine days, and adding the days of grace, makes the ninety-two.— It is said the days of grace were not demandable on this instrument; this is conceded, but until lately, when it was so decided by this Court, was a subject of much doubt at the bar, and even in the decision, the Court was not unanimous. But the parties intended to make a security on which the days of grace were allowable within the custom of merchants, and supposed they had done so. Their mistake, though it be a mistake in the legal effect of an instrument, as there is no *corrupt* intent, will excuse them. (*Berkley* v. *Guilbank, Cro. Jac.* 677—*Nevison* v. *Whitley, Cro. Car.* 501.)

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It should be added also, that a *corrupt* bargain being essential to constitute usury, whether there be such corruption, is, in this state, always a question for the Jury. In England indeed, the Court will infer this from the facts found, without, or even against a finding of the Jury upon the corrupt intent. But they also infer a *fraudulent* intent within the statute of 13 *Eliz.* and do not leave to the Jury to ascertain the intent in fact.

In this Court, it is held that fraud is a question of fact for the Jury, and the Court cannot infer it from other facts. Why is not the corrupt intent likewise to be found by the Jury? Or how is the Court better able to infer a corrupt than a fraudulent design?

The Counsel on the other side disclaims any participation in the vulgar clamour against banking institutions, while he touches every theme which may awaken prejudice against the Plaintiffs as a monied corporation. To awaken prejudice and to excite clamour, seem equally unfriendly to the investigation of truth; but here, neither can be attempted with success. It is believed that a just

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interpretation of the law, will entitle the Plaintiffs to judgment, and therefore only, we expect to obtain it.

Seawell, on the same side.—The Jury having found a general verdict for the Plaintiffs, and a motion for a new trial being overruled and an appeal taken to this Court, the question arises, has the Court below committed such error as this Court can rectify? In regard to the *facts*, I presume, it is not in the power of this Court to interfere; the consideration of them properly belonged to the Jury; and although in a case of outrage, or even of decision against the weight of evidence, it was in the *power* of the Judge below, to interfere, yet as the law has prescribed no rule, but has confided the power to his discretion, no difference of opinion between this Court and the Court below, will justify an interference. The very nature of every *discretionary* power, excludes the idea of a general rule, and therefore prevents the possibility of a common standard. And hence it is, that error will in no case lie, when the act done is matter of discretion; this principle is too well settted to require any proof.—The only error then, which the Defendants can assign, must be error in law, which the Court below committed in a matter in which this discretion is not confided. It appears from the case, that the Judge directed the Jury that taking the interest in advance was not usurious; and that the law was the same, as to the days of grace.

It seems to me, that when the state established a Bank for the express purpose of *discounting* notes, and made no particular provision as to the manner of retaining the interest, when we take into view the fact that this is the practice of every Bank in the world, it must be understood as a legislative acquiescence, that the course of business authorised by this Bank was not intended to be different from that which is used every where else. And therefore, this part of the case will stand affected by our statute against usury, precisely, as if a Bank had been

established without any thing being enacted upon the subject of interest; in which case, it must be intended that the corporation was permitted to act as other Banks, viz. permitted to retain in advance, instead of receiving at the end of the year, six pounds for every hundred loaned or forborne. For surely it cannot be supposed that the Legislature, taking a deep interest in the stock of the institution, could intend this Bank to do business upon different terms from the other Banks of the State, then in operation; where this mode was used, and from whom the State had frequently borrowed according to that mode, and which from an examination of the journals, was recognized upon a solemn question, raised before the General Assembly.

Then as to the days of grace, and taking interest on the old and new note for the same day, a decisive answer to this objection is, that they are separate contracts; the first note by its terms had fallen due, and the Bank might have enforced its payment by suit—and though when the old note was discounted, it was in the expectation that the Bank would permit a renewal; yet this, from the nature of the short credit allowed by every Bank, must be understood to rest in the option of the Bank, and to depend upon its own views of its interest and policy.—The new note, therefore, is but an application for a new loan, to discharge a former debt, then due; and does not, from the fact that it was obtained of the same bank, differ, if at all, from what the case would have been, if the dealings had been in two different banks.

As to the interest received upon the old note, which remained unpaid, after the discount of the new note, that would seem to me to fall precisely within the same rule. But it is said that the officers were directed not to pay the proceeds of the new note, unless it was applied towards extinguishing the old one. Now, it is to be observed, that as the new note was not discounted under any condition imposed by the Bank in its corporate character, the

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instructions or directions are of an informal nature, not amounting to a corporate act. The note, when discounted, produced an amount, which immediately passed to the credit of the maker, upon the books of the Bank, without any condition. The maker could then maintain his action for his discount, if payment was refused; and the Bank its action on the old note, if that was not discharged. If this consequence follows in law, it can be only on the ground that they were independent transactions; and the fact that the Bank might set off, is only an argument to prove it could maintain its action. To make taking the subsequent interest upon the old note usurious, it is necessary to prove, that the maker could not maintain his action for the sum placed to his credit, proceeding from the discount of the new note—and it must also be shewn, that the Bank, from the nature of the old bond or note, was *bound* to discount the new one, as part of the first contract; but as the Court below charged that such interest on both notes is usurious, there is no error which the Defendants can complain of. But it is insisted, that if the law is on this point, as the Court below directed, a new trial ought to have been granted by the Court, and being refused, this Court should award it.—A complete answer to this argument is, that the law upon the point depended upon the facts which the Jury were to pass upon, and which it was the province of the Jury to find; on that account, therefore, this Court cannot interfere.

But another ground equally fatal, is, that all new trials are for the attainment of the justice and equity of the case; and that the Courts, as they are bound by no positive rules, will render its assistance or not, as justice and honesty requires. In *Edmonson* v. *Marshall* (*2 Term Reports*, 4) the Court refused a new trial, though the Judge was mistaken in point of law, as to the character of the Plaintiff, upon the ground that justice had been done. The Court said, "the application for a new trial

is to the discretion of the Court, who ought to exercise that discretion in such a manner as will best answer the ends of justice."

Suppose in this case, application had been made to a Court of Equity, upon what terms would that Court interfere? They are known to be, upon paying all that is honestly due. The principles of justice are universally alike, whether in law or equity, whenever the Court is permitted judicially to see them; and they always require, that he who comes in the character of a supplicant, asking justice as a favor, should, in the first place, qualify himself by offering to do justice; and in this case, he should have been willing to pay, for the sake of a new trial, what the Plaintiffs have been contented only to demand from him.

Hogg, replied at length, but the reporters have no note of his argument.

HENDERSON, Judge.—We are satisfied with the decision of the Court, in the *Bank of Newbern* against *Pugh*; we therefore decline entering into an examination of the question, whether the Court mistook its duty in refusing a new trial. It is a mistake to suppose that this Court, since the repeal of the act declaring that it possessed appellate powers upon questions of fact, ever has awarded a new trial, because the Judge below refused one. The new trials which have been awarded here, were in cases where there was some error, which infected the verdict; such as the admission or rejection of evidence, which ought to have been received or rejected, or some misdirection of the Judge to the Jury, on questions of law, arising on the trial, or the like. Since the statute of Westminster the 2, (31 *Ed.* 1) such matters may be assigned for error, and provision is made by the statute for getting them on the record, when brought into the Court of Errors. Our statements accompanying the re-

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cords sent here, are nothing but a practical construction put upon that statute, and owe their origin to our act of 1799, relative to the mode of bringing points of law arising on the circuit before the meeting of the Judges, directed by that act. This mode was still practised in cases of appeal afterwards allowed, and was continued after the organization of the present Court; these statements, we consider as containing the proceedings excepted to in the Court below, by the party against whom they operated. The judgment on the verdict obtained improperly, that is through the error of the Judge, is here reversed, and the cause remanded, with directions to issue a *venire facias de novo*. The new trial is therefore, in consequence of the relief authorised by the statute. We may have inadvertently interfered in cases where we ought not; I think, in all probability, we did in the case of *Cherry* v. *Slade*. We have not the power of examining those parts of the charge operating in favor of the Defendants, for they are not excepted to.

But it is said, that we ought to grant a new trial, because the Plaintiff, by remitting what is called "the excess of interest," has admitted that the contract was usurious. This affords ground for a judgment for the Defendant, if it affords foundation for any act of this Court, for it is an admission of record, that the contract was usurious; why then send it to a Jury to try that fact? But there is no admission of such fact. It is quite probable that it was admitted as usurious interest, under the charge of the Judge; but the Court acts upon facts, not upon probabilities, and this admission is nothing but evidence of a fact; it is possible the Plaintiff may have remitted from other causes. He might for some reasons, unknown to us, wish to retain his verdict. He may have feared that he would not be able to obtain so large a one at another time; he may have feared that delay would produce the loss of the debt, through insolvency; or he may have had an immediate demand for the

money. These, it is true, are very improbable conjectures, but they *may* be correct; and if they *may* be so, it proves that it is not an inference of law, but of fact. In addition to this, it would not be sufficient for the Plaintiff to acknowledge simply, that he was guilty of usury in the contract, but he must confess how, that the Court may see that the statute has been violated; for peradventure he might mistake what usury is within that statute.—This is therefore neither cause for a new trial, nor for a judgment for the Defendant. But if the Plaintiffs distinctly admit upon the record, any *fact* which shows they are not entitled to recover, the Court would be as much bound to notice it as if found by the Jury, for the admissions of the parties upon the record, are the highest evidence of the facts.

If there is any error examinable by this Court, it arises from those parts of the charge which were in favor of the Plaintiffs, for these are understood as excepted to by the Defendant. These are, that taking interest in advance on this bond, was not usurious; and that taking interest for ninety-two days on this bond, it being given for renewal, is not usurious, for so I must understand this charge, notwithstanding the qualification that if the Defendants had the use of the Plaintiffs money, they ought to pay interest on it.

That the statute of usury is violated by taking the interest in advance, on the whole sum lent, is almost too evident to require argument. If the sum, say one hundred dollars, agreed to be loaned for one year, at six *per cent. per annum*, is counted down, and the lender immediately withdraws six dollars, by way of discount or interest, the sum actually forborne, which is the matrix of interest, is only ninety-four dollars, which at that rate of interest, together with itself, produces at the end of the year, ninety-nine dollars and sixty-six cents—less, by thirty-four cents, than the sum to be paid at the end of the year. As therefore, taking the interest in advance,

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gives an interest of six dollars for one year, on ninety-four dollars, the statute is violated, for it plainly directs that six pounds only, (*i. e.* six dollars) shall be taken on the hundred for forbearance, for one year, and in the same proportion, for a greater or less sum, and for a longer or shorter time. The rule extended, completely shows its impropriety, by producing a result perfectly absurd. A note for one hundred dollars, payable sixteen years and eight months after date, is offered for discount on the day of its date; if the interest on the whole sum is taken in advance, it absorbs the whole amount of the note, the person who discounts it pays not a cent for it, of course, the person who offers it gets nothing. The rule of a discount, and such no doubt, the Legislature intended to be permitted, by the statute of usury, (whatever they may have meant when they incorporated the *State Bank*,) was that such a sum, should be advanced upon a discount as would, together with its interest, amount to the sum to be paid at the maturity of the note. I speak not of the purchase of a note or bill in market, for that may be made at any price, taking care that it is not a device to cloak a loan; if it is a fair purchase, the statute has nothing to do with it. We can derive nothing from what was said by the Supreme Court of the U. S. that an authority to make discounts, gives an authority to take interest in advance. True—but is the discount to be equal to the interest on the whole sum lent, or only equal to the interest on the balance, after taking out the discount, the words in the statute being, that more than six pounds on the hundred, shall not be taken by way of "*discount* or interest." And I take it to be very clear indeed, so much so, that not a shadow of doubt is left on my mind, that the authority to make discounts, gives the power to make them in such a way only, as to leave as much outstanding as will, with its interest, amount to the sum to be paid at the maturity of the bill, note or bond, for a bond being assignable by our law, it is as

much the subject of discount as a note. Were this case therefore, to be decided by the application of our statute against usury, to its facts, unaffected by other considerations, I could not hesitate to declare the bond usurious, and therefore void.

But an exposition, legislative, judicial and popular, has been given to this statute and to usury laws, similar to it, which I am bound to respect. When the charter of this Bank was granted, there had been in operation for some years, two Banks chartered by the State, whose operations were extensive, and whose practice of taking interest in advance, on the whole sum loaned, must have been known to the Legislature: The old Bank of the United States had been in operation for twenty years, which discounted in the same manner: Banks in adjoining states, and others, with which we had great intercourse, were also in operation, governing themselves by the same rules. With this information before them, this charter was worded in substance, in the same manner as to the point we are now considering, and I believe in the same words, as that of the Bank of the United States. The State was a stockholder in each of our local Banks, and many shares were retained for the State in this Bank. These are strong *legislative* expositions.

In the Courts in New-York, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts and Connecticut, this practice has been declared not within their statutes of usury, which are similar to our own, and it has been sanctioned by the supreme judicial tribunal of the Union, and in England, even in the case of private bankers; but I shall be told, it has been sanctioned only in case of negotiable bills and notes, and not in the case of bonds. The principle has been applied there to negotiable securities, and bonds there not being negotiable, *could not be discounted*:—they there applied the remedy as far as the evil extended. The same principle

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will extend here to bonds. The *popular* exposition is equally universal, for during the thirty years that our Banks have been in operation, although many millions have been lent on the same terms, this is the first instance of resistence which I have heard of, made on these grounds, to a recovery. And were I at liberty to hazard a conjecture as to the cause of this contest, I would say that it arose from the oppressive practice of this branch of the Bank, in claiming interest on two bonds, running at the same time, that is charging interest on the old bond and on the newly discounted bond, until the proceeds of the latter, were applied to the discharge of the former. But I am free to declare, that in a case where the change of construction would produce those evils only which ordinarily arise from change of decision, I should feel all that has been done, insufficient to control the plain words of the statute. But when I look to the incalculable injury which must arise from giving a different exposition; injury, the extent of which no man can foresee, the whole of our circulating medium in the hands of individuals, and in our treasury, annihilated and rendered worthless, at a single blow—I must confess I am appalled at the consequences, and must abstain from acting—convinced that the obligation which I am under to the State, of asserting the supremacy of the law, does not require it at the expense of the peace and prosperity of individuals, and the best interests of the State.

I am inclined to think, that taking interest for ninety-two days, on the note for eighty-eight days, is not usurious. It is clearly not so for charging interest for the days of grace, although they are not demandable on a bond; for if the contract was made with an understanding that they were to be allowed, the making of a writing, whereby they were excluded, would not be usurious; for it is the usurious *contract* which vitiates the security. There cannot be any usurious security, if the contract is not usurious. If an authority is wanting to prove a po-

sition so plain as this, it will be found in *Nevison* v. *Whitley*, (*Cro. Car.* 501—*Ord. on usury*, 59.) Computing interest for the day on which the new note was taken, if interest for the same day, had been taken on the old bond, would be usurious, if it was the same, or one continued loan. But I think that it is not, and the most satisfactory evidence of this, is afforded from the fact, that it was at the option of the Bank to continue it or not. It is true, that on notes of accommodation, it is understood that it is quite probable, that the time will be extended upon a compliance with the rules of the Bank; but at the same time, it is also well understood, that the Bank may, at its option, enforce payment, which must exclude all idea that the borrower, by the terms of the contract, has a further time for payment. I think that it was usury of the most oppressive kind, to take interest on the new note, before its proceeds were applied to the discharge of the old note; for until that time, the Bank advanced nothing, and it is no excuse to say, that it was *Hunter's* fault, for he should have paid the difference and drawn a check in favor of his old note. These were the terms imposed by the Bank on the new loan, and until they were complied with, nothing was advanced, it was a bare *agreement to lend* upon the performance of the terms by *Hunter*. It is a fallacy to say that the money was to *Hunter's* credit, and subject to his check;—it would only stand to his credit upon his paying the difference, when he could check for it, and then he could only check in favor of his old note. Nothing therefore was lent by the Bank, until the proceeds were applied, and until that time, no interest should have been charged; but this Court cannot get at that question, if it could, the judgment would be reversed; for I believe that this mode of doing business is confined to the Tarborough Branch of this Bank. It has not either a legislative, judicial or popular sanction.

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The universality and the notoriety of the practice of taking interest in advance, by the Banks, and their connection with the government, would seem almost to exclude the idea of criminality; usury, by our law, is deemed to be a crime, for which, forfeitures are inflicted on the offender, as loss of the debt, and double the amount loaned or forborne, together with a liability to an indictment. In offences of this kind, if the actor is guilty, every person who is concerned in the transaction is guilty also. The directory, as having ordered the usury, which may well be inferred from their subsequent sanction, and even the stockholders if they knew of it, by receiving the dividends, incurred the forfeitures; in this latter case, the State would be implicated, it being a stockholder to a large amount. This must exclude all idea of *actual* criminality, I say actual criminality, for in reality, there cannot be a crime without an actual intent to violate the law. Crime presupposes a knowledge of the law; and ignorance of law is no defence, not because a knowledge of the law, is not essential to crime, but because ignorance is not permitted to be averred and proven, it being a presumption of law, that every man (however false in point of fact,) knows the public laws. These presumptions of law are nothing else but certain conclusions of fact, which the law draws from motives of policy and convenience; as where the probability of a fact is so very strong, that there is scarcely a possibility of its being otherwise, policy, and perhaps justice also, require that it should not be controverted; for in the first place, it is so often the fact, that it had better in all cases be so considered, rather than undergo an investigation in each case; and secondly, even if an investigation in each case was permitted, so imperfect are all human means of arriving at truth, that there is more reliance to be placed on the general conclusion, than on the result of a particular investigation. Thus, if a stroke is given with a bar of iron, it is a presumption of law that

he who gave it intended to kill, and therefore, when death ensues, the actual intent is not the subject of enquiry, although a murder cannot be committed without an *actual* intent to kill; here the law presumes the actual intent. So in England, leaving the goods in the possession of the vendor, is *per se* a fraud, that is, a presumption of law that the transaction is fraudulent; it is not so in this state. It is said that the common custom and usage of that country require that this presumption should be made, here we think, they do not. There has been an extraordinary change in the presumption of law, in the case of murder; originally, murder could only be committed in secret, for it being of its essence that it should be committed with deliberation, that is with malice *aforethought*, he who killed another openly and publicly, was not believed to have done it with malice aforethought. The punishment being death, it was inferred that he was moved to the act by passion, not by judgment or reason, the presumption of law therefore, was, that he did not commit the act with malice *aforethought*. But experience proving that this presumption was in fact unfounded, and that wicked men would, even in public, commit homicide with malice prepense, this rule of presumption was therefore abolished.

I am almost induced to believe that upon the principle that a mistake in point of fact, exempts a person from the penalties of usury, the Plaintiffs are exempted in this case; for I think it cannot well be believed, that they knew that they were violating the law, and ignorance of law, could it be believed, forms as good an excuse as ignorance of fact—they are based on the same principles, the only difference being, that in ordinary cases, the one is not to be believed, but the other is.—Upon the whole, I am of opinion that the judgment should be affirmed.

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HALL, Judge.—I concur in the opinion delivered in this case by Judge HENDERSON, who has gone into a more full examination of it, than I propose doing.

By an act of the Legislature, passed in the year 1821, (*ch.* 12 *sec.* 2,) it is declared that the Supreme Court shall possess the same power to grant new trials, as well upon matters of fact as matters of law, as the Superior Courts of Law now have, except in criminal cases. If the present question had occured during the existence of that law, it would not only be proper, but incumbent upon us, to examine the evidence in the present case, and if upon such examination, we should ascertain that the verdict was against evidence, to grant a new trial. But this act was repealed by an act passed in the succeeding year, (*ch.* 32.) This Court then possesses the power only of deciding such questions of law as shall be presented to it. It is therefore to the points of law decided by the Judge, and not to the facts submitted to and passed upon by the Jury, that our attention is to be directed; it follows of course, that if in this case the Jury found a verdict contrary to the law given them in charge by the Judge, the Judge only, and not this Court, can grant a new trial on that account. But if the Judge gives a charge to the Jury as to the law of the case, and they find a verdict accordingly, the person against whom that charge is given, has a right to have its correctness examined in this Court. It is therefore our province to enquire, whether the Judge charged in favor of the Plaintiffs against the law of the case, when he ought to have charged in favor of the Defendant.

As to the point respecting the ninety-two days, the Judge instructed the Jury, that as to the days of grace, if the Defendants had the use of the money for ninety-two days, and if the Bank only calculated legal interest for that time, it was not usurious. I am not prepared to say that the charge is wrong in this respect, because although, if a quarter of a year's interest was charged

for eighty-eight days, it would be usurious, yet it was an universal rule of the Bank, to allow three days of grace, and it is admitted that a quarter's interest for ninety-one days, is not usurious.

It is alleged again, the bond for renewal was dated and carried interest on the day the last note became due, and that the latter note carried interest on that day, which amounted to more than legal interest. This at first view seems plausible, but it requires examination. If the contract with the borrower was that renewals should take place at stated times, and it was his right to renew, the conclusion would be correct that it was usury, but this does not appear to be the case; the Bank might renew or not at its pleasure. The contract of lending, imposed no obligation upon it to renew, it might sue upon the bond discounted, when it became due. Viewing then the bond for renewal as a distinct contract, the matter stands thus: a person owes the Bank a debt—on the day it comes due he pays it, and takes up his bond; on the same day he borrows another sum of the Bank, for which he gives his bond, this is no more usury than if a stranger had borrowed the latter sum, although the bond taken up and the bond given, both bore interest on the same day. It is possible however, that this might be converted into a contrivance to elude the statute of usury. When it shall be so understood, it may have a very different construction given to it.

But it is alleged, that the Judge erred when he instructed the Jury, that deducting the interest at the time of discounting the note, was not usurious. This is a question of momentous concern to the State, and one which deeply involves in its solution, the interest of its citizens. Was it a question of the first impression, I would say that the charge of the Court was erroneous, or was it a case between one citizen and another, or a case between the Bank and a citizen, contrived to evade the statute of usury, I would still say the charge was erro-

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neous. But when I reflect upon what Banking institutions now are, and what they have been and survey their history, I am led to pause.

In England, the statutes against usury are very rigid, and much like our own act; they all prohibit taking more than a certain sum *per cent.* for the forbearing or giving day of payment for one year for any given sum. In England, in all their Banks and Banking institutions, the universal rule has been, and now is, to take interest in advance. In the old and new Bank of the United States, the same rule has prevailed—the same may be said of the local Banks in the different states; the legality of the rule has been established in the Supreme Court of the United States, and in all the state Courts, (as I understand) which have undertaken to decide the question; the practice has continued for a series of years in full view of the National and State Legislatures, and has acquired not only a judicial, but a legislative sanction. To the weight of such high authority, I feel myself bound to submit, especially, when I reflect upon the ruinous consequences, which would follow a contrary decision. It has been argued that in the Banks alluded to, bills of exchange and promissory notes only, were so discounted, but that this is the case of a bond; my answer is, that bonds with us are made negotiable, and placed upon the same footing with promissory notes, and in principle, I think there is no difference between them as far as they relate to the subject under discussion. In conclusion, the remark may pass for what it is worth, the Defendants have paid no more than what they owed, and the Plaintiffs have received no more than what was legally due them. I think the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, concurred.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

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Josiah Turner
v.
Samuel Child. } From Orange.

[In the statement of this case as presented at page 25 *ante*, two points were omitted, on which his honor the Chief-Justice gave an opinion. Although these points are not noticed in the opinions of the other Judges, and though on the main point in the cause, the Judges differed, yet in the subjoined opinion, the whole Court concurred.]

Before the Jury were impannelled in the Court below, the Defendant summitted an affidavit and moved thereon for leave to add the plea of "fully administered," which the Judge refused. On the trial, the Plaintiff produced the following account:

"Francis Child,

		To Young & Turner, Dr.
To sundry items (stated)		94 67½
Your due bill for a wagon,		150
		$244 67½
Cr.		
By J. Phillips note,	100 05	
Your Mother's do.	14	
	114 05	
Discount for 11 months off,	6 27	107 78
Balance due on this account,		$84 48½"

The Plaintiff proved that *F. Child* had bought of *Young and Turner* a wagon of the value charged.

It was then proved by another witness, that at the request of *Young*, the deceased partner, he drew off the above account, that *F. Child* was in the room while this was doing, but the account was not presented to him for payment, nor did he declare his approval of it. This witness also stated that *Young*, in directing him how to state the account, informed him that the amount of the wagon had been settled by the mother of *Mr. Child*, and directed credits to be given, and the account to be stated shewing the above balance to be due. On this proof, the

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Defendant's counsel insisted, that the wagon being the only article proved to have been delivered, and *Young* having acknowledged payment for that, the Plaintiff could not recover.

On the other side, it was said that the instructions to the witness and the account stated in pursuance thereof were all one transaction, and the account though in writing, part of the declarations of *Young*, that the whole, when offered in evidence, should be submitted to the Jury, to be judged of by them; and the Defendant was not at liberty to select the particular declaration which served his purpose, and offer that to the Jury to discharge himself, separated from the written statement then made, by which he was charged—and of this opinion was the presiding Judge.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The refusal of permission by the Court to add the pleas, was a subject within its discretion, and cannot be made the ground of appeal. (*Armstrong* v. *Wright*, 1 *Hawks*, 93.)

The evidence relative to the account was properly left to the Jury, for it is their province in a Court of Law to decide what credit is to be attached to the whole or part of any statement, whether oral or written. (*Dougl.* 781.)

The general rule is, that if a party relies upon an account produced for the purpose of claiming credit, the account must be taken all together; the party may indeed contradict or disprove it, but if he do not, it is evidence to the Jury. (5 *Taunton*, 245.)

NOTE.—The Reporters feel that an apology is due from them to the Court and the profession, for presenting the above points with the opinion upon them, detached from the residue of the case—that apology will be found in the following statement.

Long and detailed statements of facts not at all material to illustrate the opinion of the Court, are certainly a fault in a book of reports; to avoid this, the present Reporters rigidly exclude every statement which is not demanded by the points decided in the cause. When the above case was prepared for the press, the Reporters had not

seen the opinion of the Chief-Justice, and were under the impression, that in consequence of severe indisposition, he had not filed one.— The statement was made therefore, in reference to the opinions of the other Judges. After the manuscript was in the hands of the printer, the opinion of the Chief-Justice was received and printed, the printer not observing that the whole of the points noticed in it did not appear on the statement. Both the Reporters were absent at the time, and on their return, found that the statement could not be amended and reprinted, without requiring that several other sheets succeeding, should be also reprinted. They had no other alternative than to reprint the sheet, striking out the latter part of the opinion and preserving it in a distinct statement.

The State
v.
Pender Weeks & William Biggs, } From Edgecomb.

In a criminal prosecution, there being no dispute as to ownership, title papers are evidence to explain the motives of a party's conduct.

Hence, where land is sold and the vendee puts a tenant at sufferance out of possession, in an indictment for an assault in this putting out, the deed under which the vendee claims, is evidence.

Whether evidence of title can be received to decide the fact of possession between adverse occupants. Qu ?

The Defendants were indicted for an assault and battery. On the trial the prosecutor proved that he had kept a school for three weeks, in a house on the land of one *Cely Weeks*, and that he had her permission to use it, as long as he pleased, if he prevented the boys from hurting the orchard. That a few days before the assault and battery complained of, the Defendant *Weeks* had read to him a deed from *Cely Weeks*, for the land on which the school-house stood, and had ordered him off. He also proved that he left the house on a Friday evening, secured as usual, with the design of returning on Monday and resuming his business; that when he returned, he found the Defendants in the house, who had removed all his property out of it, and told him he must not enter, this he disregarded, and pushing one of them aside, went in, upon which the Defendants took him up and

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carried him out of the door. The Defendants offered in evidence, a deed from *Cely Weeks*, whereby the land on which the house stood, was conveyed to the Defendant *Weeks*, and which was executed after the permission given to the prosecutor, but before the day when the prosecutor was notified to quit—this evidence was objected to by the State, and refused by the Court. The Defendants then proved, that before the alleged assault, they entered the house peaceably, put out the property of the prosecutor, and were alone in the house, when the prosecutor returned.

His honor Judge Mangum, instructed the Jury that the question of title was wholly immaterial, that if they believed that the prosecutor had such possession of the house, as is usually held in school-houses, on the Friday evening before the alleged assault, and had left it with an intent to return on Monday, that in law, the prosecutor was in possession when the Defendants entered, and they had no right to prevent him by force, from going into the house, or to remove him therefrom after he had entered.

The Jury having returned a verdict for the State, a rule for a new trial being discharged, and judgment rendered for the State, the Defendants appealed.

The case was submitted by the *Attorney-General* for the State, and *Gaston* for the Defendants.

Henderson, Judge.—This case does not involve the question, whether title can be resorted to when there are adverse occupants to decide the fact of possession. The *fact* of possession between *Cely Weeks* and the prosecutor, being before the Jury, the deed was offered to show that the same state of facts existed between one of the Defendants and the prosecutor. It was not offered to show that title was in the Defendant, and not in the prosecutor, but to communicate to the Defendant the possession of *Cely Weeks*, if she had one, to substitute him

for her as to that fact, and for no other purpose. I think that the evidence should have been received.

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The State v. Weeks.

HALL, Judge.—It appears from the testimony of the prosecutor, that he had the consent of the owner of the land, to use the house as long as he pleased. There was no contract for that purpose, guarding her orchard from the inroads of the boys, made none; either party might alter their mind when they pleased, he might have left the house without any breach of contract, and the owner had the right of requesting him to do so, and enforcing the request by any lawful means. It appears that the Defendant *Weeks* purchased the house of the owner, notice of this was given to the prosecutor, he persisted in re-taking possession of it, after the Defendants had become possessed, and here I suppose that the assault and battery charged, was committed. It does not appear that the Defendants acted otherwise than to take up the prosecutor and put him out of doors, and as one of them owned the house, and the other acted by his authority, they had a right under the circumstances of the case to do so, if they used no unnecessary violence; but to shew this right in them, I think the deed from *Cely Weeks* to *Pender Weeks*, ought to have been read in evidence. As it was not, a new trial must be granted.

JUDGMENT REVERSED.

The State v. James K. Brown. } From Granville.

An indictment charging that the Defendant stole "a parcel of oats" is sufficiently certain.

THE INDICTMENT charged that the Defendant "feloniously did steal, take and carry away, *a parcel o oats* of the goods and chattels of one *J. R. Eaton*."

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The State v. Brown.

After a verdict for the State, the Defendant Counsel moved in arrest of judgment, upon the ground that the property stolen was not described in the indictment with sufficient certainty.

His honor Judge DANIEL, overruled the motion, and passed sentence upon the Defendant, from which he appealed to this Court.

The case was submitted by the *Attorney-General* for the State, and by *Nash*, for the Defendant.

The opinion of the Court was delivered by TAYLOR, Chief-Justice:

It appears to me that the article charged to be stolen, is described with convenient certainty, and comes up to what is required in indictments and declarations, viz: certainty to a certain intent in general.

Where this is required, every thing which the pleader should have stated, must be expressly alleged, or by necessary implication be included in what is alleged, otherwise it will be presumed against him. Now "parcel" signifies a part of the whole taken separately, and has for one of its meanings, a "a small bundle." (*Johnson's Dict.*) A bundle of oats, is the term actually employed, because oats are so made up for sale, and other purposes; but one name seems scarcely more certain than the other. It is therefore distinguishable from the cases in the books, where indictments have been held defective for uncertainty in the description of the articles. As an indictment for stealing the goods and chattels of *S. S.* without any further specification of them; for engrossing a great quantity of straw and hay, or divers bundles of wheat, without shewing how much of each, and various other cases, to the same effect. (2 *Haw.* 322.) Here there is but one article, and the quantity of that so described, that the mind cannot hesitate in understanding it. The motion to arrest the judgment should be overruled.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

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The State
v.
Curtis Orrell. } From New-Hanover.

When the death does not ensue within a year and a day after a wound is inflicted, the law presumes that it proceeded from some other cause. Hence, an indictment, upon which it does not appear that the death happened within a year and a day after the wound was given, is fatally defective.

The prisoner was tried upon the following indictment:

"The Jurors for the State upon their oath present, that *Curtis Orrell*, late of the County of New-Hanover, labourer, not having the fear of God before his eyes, but being moved and seduced by the instigation of the Devil, on the seventeenth day of May, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-six, with force and arms, in the County of New Hanover, in and upon one *Penelope Orrell*, in the peace of God and the State, then and there being, feloniously, wilfully and of his malice aforethought, did make an assault; and that the said *Curtis Orrell*, a certain gun, of the value of five shillings, then and there loaded and charged with gun-powder and leaden shot, which gun he the said *Curtis Orrell*, in his hands then and there had and held, to, against, and upon the said *Penelope Orrell*, then and there feloniously, wilfully, and of his malice aforethought, did shoot and discharge, and that the said *Curtis Orrell*, with the leaden shot aforesaid, out of the gun aforesaid, then and there by the force of the gunpowder, shot and sent forth as aforesaid, the said *Penelope Orrell*, in and upon the left side of her the said *Penelope Orrell*, a little above the left hip of her the said *Penelope Orrell*, then and there feloniously, wilfully, and of his malice aforethought, did strike, penetrate, and wound, giving to the said *Penelope Orrell*, then and there, with the leaden shot aforesaid, so as aforesaid shot discharged and sent forth out of the gun aforesaid, by the said *Curtis Orrell* in and upon the left side of her the said *Penelope Orrell*, a little above the left hip of her the said *Penelope Orrell*, one mortal wound, of the depth of six inches, of which said mortal wound, the said *Penelope Orrell* died. And so the Jurors aforesaid, upon their oath aforesaid, do say, that the said *Curtis Orrell*, the said *Penelope Orrell*, in manner and form aforesaid, feloniously, wilfully, and of his malice aforethought, did kill and murder, &c."

After a verdict for the State, the prisoner's Counsel moved in arrest of judgment:—

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1st. Because it was not averred in the indictment that the death happened within a year and a day, after the mortal wound was given.

2d. Because it did not appear upon the indictment, that the deceased died in the county of New-Hanover.

For these reasons, the judgment was arrested by his honor Judge Norwood, whereupon the Solicitor prayed an appeal.

No Counsel appeared for the prisoner in this Court, and the case was submitted by the *Attorney-General*, without argument.

Henderson, Judge.—All the authorities tells us, that some period of time when the alleged offence was committed, *must* be stated in the indictment; yet the very same authorities most expressly inform us, that it is entirely unimportant to confine the proofs of the commission of the crime to the day charged, all that is required is to show the offence was committed prior to the filing of the bill of indictment. Thus an indictment, omitting to state any time when an offence was committed, is insufficient; yet if the bill states that the offence was committed, as in this case, on the 17th day of May 1826, proof of an offence committed on the 1st day of January 1825, will support the charge. All that the law requires, is that an offence prior in point of time, to the filing of the bill, should be proved. But it is our business to declare the law as we find it established by the law-makers—not to make it ourselves; from these principles, it necessarily follows, that we must not understand that the mortal wound was given on the 17th day of May 1826. It may have been given at any day previous to the finding of the bill, for such proof would have supported the charge that it was given on that day. We cannot therefore, draw any aid from the time laid in the bill, when the wound was given, and by comparing that time, with the filing of the bill, shew that the

death followed within one year and a day, from the time the wound was given. If such was not the case, that is if death did not take place within a year and a day of the time of receiving the wound, the law draws the conclusion, that it was not the cause of death; and neither the Court nor Jury, can draw a contrary one.—It not appearing therefore upon this indictment, when the death happened, and as it may have been more than the period aforesaid, after the wound, the Court is bound to say that it does not appear to them, that the Defendant has been guilty of the murder of the deceased. The judgment therefore, was properly arrested in the Court below, for it is essential that it should appear, that death ensued within what may be called the prescribed time.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—I cannot doubt that both the objections to this indictment are well taken. The place of the death ought to be stated, to the end of shewing that the offence charged, is within the jurisdiction of the Court. Though the rule was plain at common law, that murder, in common with other offences, must be enquired into, in the county wherein it was committed; yet it was doubted, whether if a person received the stroke in one county, and died in another, the offence was completed in either. The statute of 2 & 3 *Ed.* vi, provides however, that the trial shall be in the county where the death happens, and supposing that statute to be in force, it cannot be intended on this indictment, that the death took place in New-Hanover; for aught that appears, it may have taken place out of the State.

Nor is it less important to state the time of the death, in order to show that the deceased died of the wound given her by the prisoner, within a year and a day after she received it. For if the death happened beyond that time, the law would presume that it proceeded from some other cause than the wound. (2 *Inst.* 218.) For these reasons, I am of opinion the judgment should be arrested.

Judgment affirmed.

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The State
v.
Jim, a negro slave. } From New-Hanover.

In an indictment for a rape, the words "forcibly and against the will," are necessary.

Hence, an indictment for a capital felony, under the act of 1823, not containing those words, was held to be fatally defective.

Per TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, a slave on the trial of such an indictment, is entitled to a Jury of slave owners.

The Defendant was indicted under the act of 1823 for making an assault "in and upon the body of one *M. J.* a white female, with intent her the said *M. J.* then and there feloniously to ravish, and carnally know, &c."

In making up the Jury, the Counsel for the Defendant challenged for cause those Jurors who were not owners of slaves, which was overruled by the presiding Judge. After a verdict for the State, the Defendant's Counsel moved in arrest of judgment, because it was not charged in the indictment, that the offence was committed "violently, forcibly and against the will of the said *M. J.*" His honor Judge NORWOOD, for this cause, arrested the judgment, whereupon the Solicitor prayed an appeal to this Court.

The Attorney-General declined to argue the case for the State.

Gaston, for the Defendant.—1st. The prisoner was entitled to a Jury of slave owners. (acts of 1773, 1807, 1816 and 1818.)

2d. The offence is not sufficiently described in the indictment. When a new offence is created, or an old one aggravated into a felony, the indictment must bring the offence within the words of the statute. (*Starkie* 240 *to* 253.) The words of the statute are, with "intent to commit a rape upon the body, &c." These words are not used, and those substituted, are not equally precise.

3d. In an indictment for a rape, it is not sufficient to say "feloniously ravished." (1 *Russel* 807, *Starkie* 84,) the words "against the will, &c." are absolutely necessary, and so are all the precedents. (3 *Chitty's C. L,* 810, 815, 816, *Archbold Crim. Plead.* 258, 261.)

HENDERSON, Judge.—Rape is the carnal knowledge of a female, *forcibly* and *against her will.* These essential requisites *forcibly* and *against her will,* are omitted in this indictment. But it is said, that as the word "ravish" of itself, implies that the act was done forcibly, and against the will of the female, the words "*feloniously ravished,*" supply this defect. This would be transferring from the Court to the Jury, the right and power of drawing inferences of law; they and not the Court would decide, what acts did, and what did not amount to rape. The law therefore, in this and all other cases, requires the facts which constitute the offence to be stated, that the Jury may affirm them or not, according to the evidence. Thus in murder, which *ex vi termini,* means a homicide committed with malice aforethought, it is not sufficient to state in the indictment, that the accused feloniously murdered the deceased. And so in other offences, the facts constituting the offence must be stated, for without such statement, it cannot appear to the Court that the Jury have not drawn a false and impossible conclusion. The indictment therefore is defective, and the judgment of the Superior Court must be affirmed.

There are other points arising in the cause, upon which, as they have not been argued, I do not wish to express an opinion.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The charge in this indictment was no more than a misdemeanor at common law, though an aggravated one, as it still continues in relation to all but the colored population. But the form of the indictment constantly laid the intent, to be, to commit

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the offence "violently and against the will" of the female, as appears from the precedents referred to by the Attorney-General. The late act of Assembly having elevated the offence to a capital felony, affords an additional reason for maintaining and adhering to the established forms, for if so much precision is required to put a misdemeanor in the shape of an indictable offence, *a fortiori* should it be observed, when the same offence is made capital, for the policy of the law will sometimes overlook exceptions made to an indictment for misdemeanor, which nevertheless, it will sustain in *favorem vitæ*. In an indictment for an assault with intent to murder, it is essential to state the intent to be "feloniously, wilfully, and of his malice aforethought, to kill and murder," because these are the characteristics of the crime designed to be perpetrated, and for the same reason, and in this case a stronger one, the essential qualities of the crime should be laid in an indictment for attempting it. There is indeed a case (3 *Johns.* 505,) where the indictment was sustained, which charged the intent to commit a murder, on the ground that it followed the words of the statute. But in that case, the statute did not raise the offence beyond its original degree of misdemeanor, but only aggravated the punishment, by imprisonment in the state prison. For this omission therefore, I think this indictment is defective.

It appears to me, that the act of 1793, c. 381, extending the trial by Jury to slaves, and directing the Jury to be composed of owners of slaves, is not repealed by any subsequent law. A twofold consideration dictated the policy of this law, the force of which remains unimpaired by the extension of additional privileges to slaves. It was intended to surround the life of the slave with additional safeguards, and more effectually to protect the property of the owner, by infusing into the trial, that temperate and impartial feeling, which would probably exist in persons owning the same sort of property.

That the master would have assurance of an equitable trial by persons, who had property constantly exposed to similar accusations, and who would not wantonly sacrifice the life of a slave, but yield it only to a sense of justice, daily experience is sufficient to convince us.—The property of a man is more secure when he cannot be deprived of it, except by a Jury, part of whom at least, have the like kind of property to lose. And this reason, it seems to me, continues to operate with full force, notwithstanding the many humane and valuable provisions which have been subsequently made for the trial of slaves. I am of opinion, that the judgment should be arrested.

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The State v. Negro Jim.

JUDGMENT AFFIRMED.

CASES

ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN THE

SUPREME COURT

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA.

JULY TERM, 1827.

Superior Court Office
v.
David Lockman, } From Lincoln.

A party is at all times answerable for his own costs, and though he succeed in the cause, execution may issue against him therefor, if the same cannot be made out of the party cast.

Lockman recovered judgment in the Court below against one *Allen*, and the Sheriff returned "*Nulla bona*," to a *fieri facias* issuing thereon, and the fees due the officers of the Court for services rendered at the instance of *Lockman*, the Plaintiff, remaining unpaid, a notice was served on him to shew cause why execution should not issue against him for the amount of those fees.

A motion being made below for execution, according to the notice, his Honor Judge STRANGE, who presided, refused the motion and dismissed the proceedings; upon which, the case was brought here by appeal.

Wilson, who appeared in this Court in support of the motion, cited *Revisal*, c. 138---*Merrits* v. *Merrits* (1 *Hay.* 20) and *Officers* v. *Taylor* (*ante* 99.)

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Sup'r Court. v. Lockman.

HALL, Judge.—Strictly speaking, the party is at all times answerable for his own costs; but under the act of 1777. *Rev.* c. 115, s. 90, the successful party being authorised to recover them from the party cast, the practice has been to wait the event of the suit, and then to issue execution against the party cast for costs; before which time, the officers do not claim to be paid their costs. But when the Plaintiff's costs cannot be recovered of the Defendant, there is no reason why the Plaintiff should not pay them. And so it was held, in *Merrit* v. *Merrit*, and *Brehon* v. *Tatom's adm'r.* (1 *Hay.* 20). I therefore think, that in this case, the motion ought to have been allowed in the Superior Court.

PER CURIAM, Judgment reversed.

Lawson Henderson, assignee, &c. v. William Shannon. } From Lincoln.

Where securities are declared void by statute, they cannot be enforced even by an assignee for value and without notice; but a bond, though void at common law for turpitude of consideration, being assignable, may be enforced by such assignee. and there is no distinction between considerations *malum in se* and *malum prohibitum*.

DEBT upon a sealed note, or single bill, tried before DANIEL Judge. On the trial, the case was that *Shannon* had been arrested upon a charge of burning a house belonging to one *Caldwell*, and after his arrest he gave his bond, with the other defendant as his surety, payable to *Caldwell*, for the purpose of compounding the prosecution, upon which the warrant was dismissed. Afterwards, and before the bond fell due, *Caldwell* assigned the same by endorsement to the Plaintiff for a valuable consideration, and without any notice to the Plaintiff of the consideration on which it was given.

The presiding Judge, upon these facts, directed a verdict for the Defendants; and from the judgment thereon the Plaintiff appealed.

In this Court, no Counsel appeared for the Defendants, and *Wilson*, for the appellant, argued as follows:

The general rule is, that where the maker is not at liberty to object the want of consideration against an indorsee, neither is he at liberty to object against him the illegality of the consideration. (*Stiers* v. *Lashley*, 6 *Term R.* 61. *Brown* v. *Turner*, 7 *Term* 626. *Selwyn's N. P.* 244. *Chitty on Bills*, 52.)

The case of notes and bills founded on usurious or gaming considerations is an exception from the rule, founded on the express words of the statutes. (*Peacock* v. *Rhodes*. *Doug.* 633).

No other exception is established by an adjudged case, or supported by a respectable opinion, and our case is left within the operation of the general rule---a rule demanded in a commercial country for the security of credit and the diffusion of trade, and entitled here to a particularly liberal contruction, for our Legislature has declared in favor of the most extended negotiability of securities. (*Rev.* 541).

Should it be said, that the general rule applies only to considerations merely *malum prohibitum*, we answer, first, that to avoid punishment by a pecuniary recompence to the party injured, has in itself no moral turpitude, and in a natural state, is not only allowable but praiseworthy. The policy which forbids it, is the mere creature of society, which having established a public right of prosecution, must of course prohibit any private interference; and hence, even this restricted rule embraces our case. But, secondly, we answer, that the law recognizes no such distinction between *malum in se* and *malum prohibitum*. This is expressly declared by the Court, in *Aubert* v. *Maze*, 2 *Bos. & Pul.* 371.

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TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.---If this were a question between the original parties to the bond, I should have no doubt that the defence could be available for the Defendant, since the consideration of the bond is illegal; and I should be willing to make a similar decision as against an assignee; for the rule of law which avoids the bond, though founded on evident justice and policy, may be eluded in every instance, if an assignee without notice can recover. But this is a consideration for the Legislature, and they have not left us at liberty to decide according to our individual perceptions of justice, but have established a rule which we are bound to follow.

The act of 1796, makes bonds "negotiable, in the same manner, and under the same rules and regulations as notes called promissory, or negotiable notes have heretofore been." This refers us to the existing law relative to promissory notes, which must furnish the rule for the decision in this case. The cases which are familiarly known, concur in establishing the position, that independently of positive enactments, where a negotiable instrument is voidable, as between the original parties, either because it is founded on a consideration prohibited by the common law, or where it was without consideration at its commencement, it is nevertheless good in the hands of an indorsee for valuable consideration without notice, either express or implied, of the defect or failure of the consideration, as regards any other person than his own immediate indorsee. An indorsee so described, is not affected by fraud or other transactions between the original parties. (3 *Caines* 279. 4 *Mass.* 161).

But notice, in legal understanding, is not confined to the positive knowledge of a fact, but the law implies it, whenever such circumstances of suspicion exist, as ought in reason to put a man upon enquiry into the transaction between the parties to whose contract he is about to succeed. Thus, an indorsee who takes a note after the

time of payment has elapsed, may, in an action against the maker, be repelled by any defence of which the maker could have availed himself in an action by the payee, such as fraud, want of consideration, payment, release, set-off, &c. (3 *Term Rep.* 80. 1 *H. Bl.* 89, *note* a.)

But I have met with no case, excepting those provided for by statute, wherein an indorsee without notice, and for valuable consideration, can be affected by the illegality or defect of the consideration when he sues the maker. Here, the bond was indorsed before it became due, and for a valuable consideration; for which reasons, I think, the judgment below wrong, and that there ought to be a new trial.

HALL, Judge.---This is not a contest between the obligee and the obligors, as was the case in *Collins* v. *Blantum.* (2 *Wils.* 347). There, the bond was given to stifle a prosecution for perjury, and both Plaintiff and Defendant were privy to the unlawful consideration, for which reason the bond was held to be void: nor is it the case of a bond declared to be void by statute on account of the illegality of the consideration on which it was given, as was the case in *Lowe & others* v. *Waller.* *Doug.* 736. where a bill of exchange given upon an usurious consideration, was held to be void in the hands of an indorsee for a valuable consideration without notice of the usury. The present case, is one where the bond is given upon a consideration which avoids it at common law, but assigned to the Plaintiff before it became due, and without notice of the consideration on which it was given. I had doubted whether the purpose, to stifle a prosecution, for which this bond was given, was not of so criminal a nature as to make it void in the hands of an indorsee; but it is said by two Judges, in *Aubert* v. *Maze* (2 *Bos. & Pull.* 371) that there is no distinction between cases that are *malum prohibitum* and *malum in se*; and I am not aware that

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any adjudged case contradicts this position. Taking it then, that there is no such distinction, the case of *Steers* v. *Lashley* (6 *Term* 61) must be considered an authority for the Plaintiff. There, A was employed as a broker in stock-jobbing transactions for B. and paid money for him, for which he drew a bill on B, and indorsed it to C. after B had accepted it; but C had a knowledge of the unlawful consideration on which it was drawn, and *for that reason*, it was held by the Court, that he could not recover. From which I am to infer, that had he been ignorant of the illegal consideration on which the bill was drawn, he would have been entitled to the judgment of the Court in his favor. So in the case of *Brown* v. *Turner* (7 *Term* 626) where a bill drawn upon an illegal consideration, having been indorsed after it became due, was held liable in the hands of the indorser to every defence which existed against it in the hands of the original payee. From which I infer, that had it been indorsed before it became due, and without notice of the consideration on which it was drawn, as in the present case, the Plaintiff would have been entitled to the judgment of the Court. Therefore I think, the law is in favor of the Plaintiff, and that the rule for a new trial be made absolute.

Per Curiam, Judgment reversed, and new trial awarded.

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The Judges to the use of Wright Edmondson, v. N. Washington & others. } From Wayne.

Where a Judge's order directs a certiorari to issue to the County Court, it is no violation of duty in the Clerk of the Superior Court to issue the writ without security; to take such security belongs to the Clerk of the former Court before yielding obedience to the writ.

By the second section of an act of Assembly, passed in 1810, entitled "*an act to compel persons to give security in certain cases,*" it is enacted, "that in all cases where *certioraris* are directed to the County Courts, *the clerk of the court is hereby required to take security*, in the same manner, &c. that security is taken on appeals from the County to the Superior Court."

In 1821, one *Jernigan*, against whom *Edmondson* had obtained a judgment in Wayne County Court, presented to the Defendant *N. Washington*, the Clerk of the Superior Court of that county, the mandate of the Chief-Justice directing him to issue writs of certiorari and supercedeas to bring up the record of that judgment, and to supercede execution thereon. The mandate was unconditional in its terms, and *Washington* issued the writs and the Clerk of the County Court certified the record, no security having been taken by either of them. Whereupon, *Edmondson* conceiving this a breach of duty in the Clerk of the Superior Court, brought this action upon his official bond.

On the trial in the Court below, his Honor Judge DONNELL directed a verdict for the Defendants, and the Plaintiffs appealed.

The case was here submitted without argument, by *Badger* and *W. H. Haywood, j'r.* for the appellant, and *Gaston* contra.

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HALL, Judge.—The Judge instructed the Jury, that the Clerk of the Superior Court, in issuing the writ of supercedeas on receiving the mandate of the Chief-Justice, was not guilty of misconduct in office, so as to subject himself and his securities to the Plaintiff's action, and in this charge I think the Judge was guilty of no error.—The act of 1810, c. 793, directs, that in all cases where certioraris are directed to the County Courts, the Clerk of the Court shall take security, in the same manner, and under the same regulations that security is taken on appeals from the County to the Superior Courts.

It was the duty of the Clerk of the *County* Court to take security as directed by this act, before he obeyed the certiorari, and a refusal by him who prayed such certiorari to give security, would be a sufficient excuse and return to the writ. But this act is inapplicable to the present case. It imposes no such duty upon a Sheriff to whom a supercedeas is directed; nor is any such duty imposed upon the Clerk of the Superior Court who issued the supercedeas, either by law, or the mandate of the Judge who authorised him to issue it.—I therefore think, the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

PER CURIAM. The rule for a new trial is discharged.

The Governor for the use of the State Bank
v.
Allen Twitty & others.
} From Rutherford.

The return of a sheriff that a *fi. fa.* is satisfied is conclusive upon his sureties in an action on his official bond.

A sheriff's bond payable to the Governor and his successors in a sum different from that directed by law, cannot be sued in the name of the successor.

The writ and declaration were in debt in the name of "*Gabriel Holmes*, Governor, &c. and successor of *John Branch*, late Governor, &c." for the sum of five thou-

sand pounds, and the action was brought on the official bond given by one *Alley*, and the Defendants his sureties, upon *Alley's* appointment to the office of Sheriff of Rutherford in the year 1820.

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On the trial before his honor Judge RUFFIN, in order to prove a breach of the condition of the bond, the Plaintiff showed that the State Bank obtained judgment against one *Ledbetter* and others, in March 1820, and issued execution thereon directed to *Alley*, which was by him returned "satisfied in part by the payment to him of eight hundred dollars;" and it was proved that *Alley* refused to pay any part of the money either to the Plaintiffs in the execution, or into Court.

On the part of the Defendants, it was proved that no part of the $800 was actually received by *Alley* after the execution came into his hands; but that *Ledbetter* not intending to defend the action, had on being served with the *capias ad respondendum*, paid that sum to *Alley*, to be applied to the payment of the judgment, when execution should issue, and the counsel for the Defendants insisted that this was not a receipt by *Alley*, in his official capacity, and that consequently, there was no breach shown to support the action. The presiding Judge being of opinion, that this evidence had not varied the case, directed a verdict for the Plaintiff, and a motion for a new trial being overruled, the Defendants appealed.

In this Court, the case was considered not only upon the motion for a new trial, but also upon a motion in arrest of judgment made here, and was argued by *Gaston*, for the Appellants, and by *Wilson*, contra.

Gaston, for the Defendants,

I. The breach assigned, is not for making a false return, but for the non payment of money received on an execution. This distinction is not nominal, for if the Defendant in the execution was insolvent, it would affect the amount of damages.

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The sureties are liable only according to their engagement, not for any thing which may be tantamount to it. They are bound only for the official acts of the Sheriff; this was not an official act, as there was no process in the Sheriff's hands, authorising him to receive the money as Sheriff.

Had no money been paid by *Ledbetter*, but the Sheriff being his debtor, had engaged to satisfy the execution, this engagement would not bind the sureties. (*Codwise* v. *Field*, 9 *Johns. Rep.* 263. *Turner* v. *Findall*, 1 *Cranch.* 117.)

A return is only *prima facie* evidence of the facts contained in it, if the return had stated the facts now proved, it would not prevent the Plaintiff from taking out an alias. (*Gyfford* v. *Woodgate*, 11 *East.* 297.

II. The verdict cannot be sustained; the bond is made payable to *John Branch*, Governor, &c. not being taken according to the requisites of the act of 1777, it must be regarded as a bond given to an individual. (2 *Hawks* 4.) Independent of that act, the successor cannot, in case of a sole corporation, take personalty either in possession or in action. The Chamberlain of London is an exception to this rule, founded on the custom of that city; and the rule is the same, although the grant is to the successors. (*Termes de la ley* 167–68. *Com. Dig. Franchise F.* 15. *Dyer* 48 *a.* *Fulwood's case* 4 *Reports* 65 *a.* 1 *Rol. Ab.* 515. *Co. Litt.* 46 *b.*)

Wilson, for the Plaintiffs,

1. This question has already been decided in favor of the Plaintiffs. (*State Bank* v. *Twitty & Ledbetter*, 2 *Hawks* 1.) If there is any error in the charge of the Judge, it is in favor of the Defendants, for it is questionable whether the evidence offered to exculpate them, ought to have been received; the return, being a matter of record, is not only *prima facie* evidence, but conclu-

sive upon all the parties, unless attacked by the sureties, upon the ground of fraud and collusion between the Plaintiffs and the Sheriff; this is not pretended.

2. It is objected, that the suit being brought upon a bond which is good at common law only, ought to be brought in the name of *John Branch*, and not in that of *Gabriel Holmes*, as his successor—*non constat here*, but that these are the words of the bond.

If however, the Court will presume that *Branch* is the obligee, then this is a proper case for this Court to amend. (*Taylor's Revisal* 68. *Justices of Camden* v. *Sawyer*, 2 *Hawks* 61. *Wilcox* v. *Hawkins*, 3 *Ditto* 84.)

HALL, Judge.—When this case came before the Court at a former term, (2 *Hawks*, 1) it was considered that the Plaintiff was not entitled to a summary remedy under the act of Assembly, by merely notifying the Sheriff and his securities, to show cause why judgment should not be entered against them, because the Sheriff's bond was not given pursuant to the act, and that circumstance in the case, then disposed of it. I am sorry to be under the necessity of saying, that for a reason founded on the same principle, the case must *now* be disposed of.

We then decided, that as the bond was not taken as prescribed by the act, it was not void, but that the party grieved must have recourse to a common law remedy; as with respect to the remedy, so it is with respect to parties, if not taken as the act prescribes, although made payable to *John Branch*, Governor, and his successors, this action cannot be maintained on the bond in the name of the successor.

Another question was then somewhat examined relative to the Sheriff's return. Speaking for myself, I was too much influenced by the reasoning on behalf of the securities, which has since been adopted in *McKellar*, v. *Bowell*, (4 *Hawks* 34) without observing its total inapplicability to the case. There, the decree was not per-

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mitted to be received as evidence against the securities, because they were not parties to it, and because the evidence on which it rested, might again be brought before the Court, when they became parties in any other suit; and so in this case, it was said the Sheriff's return was not conclusive evidence—that the question still was open had the Sheriff in fact, received the money, although his return stated that he had. But I think the Sheriff's return conclusive of the question, because as long as that return stands, the Plaintiff has no remedy against the Defendant, for the amount which the Sheriff's return states to be received.

But I think for the reason first stated, this action cannot be sustained.

Per Curiam. Judgment arrested.

The Governor to the use of William Holliday and another, executors of Thomas Holliday
v.
James Eastwood and others,
} From Greene.

A sale under a *venditioni exponas* of lands, or with or without a *venditioni*, of goods levied on under a *fi. fa.* is an act done in execution of the authority given by the writ under which the levy was made. *Therefore*, when such a sale was made in 1820, under a levy made before, it was held, that the Sheriff's refusal to pay over the money raised by the sale, was no breach of the condition of his official bond for 1820.

A *venditioni* can issue only to the Sheriff who made the levy.

James Eastwood, was Sheriff of Greene, from May, 1819 until May, 1820; at which time he was reappointed and gave with the other Defendants, his sureties, the bond on which this action is bought, dated May 1820, and conditioned for the faithful discharge of his duties.

On the trial, the evidence was that the executors of *Holliday*, recovered three several judgments against one

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Brand, of which the whole amount was $300, on which *fi. fa's* issued, tested of February and returnable to May 1820, on which *Eastwood* the Sheriff, returned that he had levied upon a tract of land and several negroes, which remained unsold for want of bidders.

On one of these returns, a *venditioni exponas* issued, returnable to August, 1820, on which the Sheriff returned that no sale was made for want of bidders. It did not appear in evidence, that any other executions issued upon these judgments or either of them, but on the 27th February, 1821, *Eastwood* sold the land levied upon, for the sum of fifteen hundred dollars, and the negroes for a like sum, and a small balance remaining in his hands of the proceeds of the sale, after satisfying the judgments as well as other demands upon *Brand*, *Eastwood* came to a settlement and accounted with him therefor. The above judgments not being paid by the Sheriff, the question was whether the Plaintiff had shown a breach for which the Defendants were liable upon the bond of 1820.

His honor Judge DANIEL, who presided, instructed the jury, that if no other executions issued than those mentioned above, the Plaintiff had shown no breach, that it was incumbent on the Plaintiff, if any other execution did issue, to produce evidence thereof; and further, that if other executions had issued, founded on the levy returned to May 1820, as writs of *venditioni exponas*, and under these sale was made, such sale related to the levy, and such new writ only authorized or required the completion of the former execution, of which the levy was the commencement, and therefore no breach was shown of the condition of the present bond.

Under these directions, the jury found for the Defendants, and a rule for a new trial being discharged and judgment given, the Plaintiffs appealed.

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No counsel appearing in this Court for the appellant, *Gaston* on the other side, submitted the case without argument.

Hall, Judge.—I think the charge of the Judge to the jury in the Superior Court was correct. The question submitted to the Court is somewhat confused, because *Eastwood* was Sheriff both in 1819 and 1820—let us suppose that some other person was Sheriff in 1819, and that the executions of *fieri facias* issued into his hands, and were returned, no sale for want of bidders, to May Court, 1820, at which Court, *Eastwood* was appointed Sheriff. From that Court the Plaintiff in the executions, thought proper to issue writs of *venditioni exponas*, it is proper that these writs should issue to the first Sheriff who had levied on the property, because an execution is said to be an entire thing, and he who begins it must end it, (1 *Hay.* 415—*Gwillim's Bacon, Sheriff J. cases therein cited*) consequently it would be the duty of the first Sheriff, not of *Eastwood*, to sell the property as was done, in February 1821. The power of finally selling the property, was a continuation of the power which he had to levy upon it. But it seems that the same person, *Eastwood*, was Sheriff in 1819 and 1820, then it follows that as he levied upon the property by virtue of his appointment in 1819, and sold it, and received the proceeds of the sale under a continuation of a power derived from the same appointment, that he did not in any respect act under the authority of his appointment in 1820—that he might and ought to have sold the property in 1821 although he had not been appointed Sheriff in 1821. The consequence is that his failure to pay the money which is alledged as a breach, can be no breach of the bond given at May Court, 1820. I therefore think, the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

Per curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

Den on demise of Ambrose Seville
v.
Addison Whedbee.
} From Pasquotank.

The next collateral relation to the person last seised, though *ex parte paterna*, shall inherit under the act of 1784, an estate descended *ex parte materna*. And the same rule is, though this collateral relation be of the half blood, and come *in esse* after the death of the person last seised.

EJECTMENT.—The Jury in the Court below, found a special verdict, the material facts of which are—that the premises in dispute were devised in 1791, by the will of *Thomas Davis* to his wife *Rebecca*, who afterwards intermarried with one *Robertson Seville*, had issue by him a son called *William*, and died in 1804, leaving the son surviving, upon whom the premises descended. *Robertson Seville* the husband, also survived his wife, and intermarried with another, by whom he had issue the lessor of the Plaintiff, born in October, 1805. *William* the son of *Rebecca*, died seised in August preceding the birth of his half brother the lessor of the Plaintiff, and *Robertson* the second husband of *Rebecca* died in 1810. Upon these facts, the jury prayed the advice of the Court, if the Plaintiff was entitled, &c. and in the Court below, by PAXTON, Judge, judgment was rendered for the Plaintiff, from which the Defendant appealed.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—In the principal feature of this case, it is not distinguishable from *Ballard* v. *Hill*, where the maternal half brother was preferred to a more distant collateral, though the estate descended upon the brother, under whom he claimed, from the father. It was a contest between the maternal brothers and sisters, and the paternal cousin who was heir at common law. In this case, the lessor of the Plaintiff is paternal half brother, and the estate descended to his brother from his

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mother. The record not disclosing that there are any heirs nearer in degree on the side of the mother, the Plaintiff is entitled to recover.

The other question arising out of the facts stated, has also been adjudged in the case of *Cutlar* v. *Cutlar*, (2 *Hawks* 329.) There, the lessor of the Plaintiff was born after the death of his brother; but upon his birth, he became heir to him, and is consequently entitled according to the principles of the common law.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

Nathaniel Boyden & wife
v.
John Odeneal & wife.
} From Stokes.

The indorsement of an attorney on a writ, is only *prima facie* evidence of the time when it issued.

CASE for words tried before NORWOOD, Judge, and on the trial, the only question was, whether the Plaintiff was barred by the statute of limitations. The entry in the margin of the writ was in these words, "issued the 18th day of July 1823," and the Defendant offered to prove that in fact the writ was not issued until the 28th of September, 1823. This evidence was opposed on the part of the Plaintiff, who proved that the writ was filled up and issued by *T. Lacy*, an attorney of the Court below, and contended that the entry in his handwriting was conclusive of the time of issuing the writ, of which opinion, was the presiding Judge, and he rejected the evidence offered by the Defendant. As the action accrued with six months before the 18th of July, the Plaintiff had a verdict, and a new trial being refused, the Defendant appealed.

Gaston, for the Appellant, cited *Brown* v. *Van Dewoser* (10 *Johns. Rep.* 51. *Middleton* v. *Manuceptors of Sylvester*, 1 *Sid.* 216, *and Grifford* v. *Woodgate*, 11 *East.* 296.)

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—The point to be decided is, whether the Defendant may prove that the indorsement on the writ as to the time of issuing it is wrong, and that in truth it was issued several months later. The act of 1777, sec. 13, made it the duty of the clerk or attorney issuing original process, to mark thereon the day, on which the same shall be issued, and this duty is enforced under a heavy penalty. The fact as to the time when a writ issued, is all important in cases where the statute of limitations is relied upon, since the action must be commenced or brought within the different periods specified after the cause of action accrues. The plea in this case is, that the Defendant was not guilty within six months before the issuing of the writ, then when the writ did issue, is the very point in dispute, and I apprehend it never could be the intent of the Legislature, to make either the inadvertent or the designed untrue indorsement upon the writ, conclusive evidence of the fact.

If the indorsement of the writ had been confided to the Clerk alone, the argument would be something stronger in favour of making it conclusive evidence of the time, "for no one can say that a writ was purchased at another time than it bears date, for to aver that it was antedated, tends to the discredit of the officer of record," 2 *Plow.* 492. But this only goes to the mode of redress, the party is not finally concluded by the false date, but may have relief in a summary way, (2 *Burr.* 966.) But it would be an alarming principle to establish, that the Plaintiffs attorney can prevent the bar of the statute of limitations, and thus finally conclude the Defendant by antedating the writ. I am of opinion, that the Defendant ought to have been permitted to controvert the indorsement on the writ, which is only *prima facie* evidence against him, and that there should be a new trial.

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HALL, Judge.—By the act of 1777, (*Rev. c.* 115, *s.* 18,) it is made the duty of the clerk or attorney issuing process, to mark thereon, the day on which it shall be issued. When process has been issued by an attorney, his indorsement thereon of the day on which it issued, is *prima facie* evidence, but no more.

The Legislature did not intend to give to such an indorsement the force of a record. In the present case, the Plaintiffs proved, that the indorsement was made by *T. Lacy;* it was surely competent for the Defendant to prove (and by evidence of the same grade) that the indorsement was *not* made by *T. Lacy*, but that it was made by some other person, or that if it was made by *T. Lacy*, he was mistaken as to the day on which the writ issued. It seems to me it was a question proper to be decided by such evidence.

Therefore, I think the rule for granting a new trial should be made absolute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and rule for new trial made absolute.

William Underwood
v.
Clarissa Lane & another. } From Randolph.

A judgment and execution were returned to the Justice by the constable; afterwards, they both searched among the official papers of the former, but could not find them. The Justice and the Plaintiff in the judgment having removed out of the state, it was held, that proof of this search by the constable, entitled one claiming under the judgment and execution, to give parol evidence of their contents.

A bill of sale for a slave must be registered in the county where the vendee lives.

TRESPASS for taking a negro slave out of the possession of the Plaintiff, tried before NORWOOD, Judge.

The Plaintiff claimed title to the negro under a purchase at a Constable's sale, and should a pluries execution and sale, and a purchase by himself. But not being able to produce the judgment and former executions, in order to entitle himself to offer secondary evidence thereof, he called as a witness the Constable, who deposed, that he had returned to one *Williams*, the Justice who granted the judgment, the paper on which the warrant and judgment were written, and also the prior executions—that he, with *Williams*, had made two several searches among the papers of *Williams*, kept in a trunk containing all the papers on which he had acted officially, and the judgment and executions were not to be found—that *Williams* afterwards, at the request of the witness, searched again for them, and as he stated without success—that *Williams*, the Justice, and one *McNeill*, the Plaintiff in the judgment, had removed out of the state, and the latter was reported to be dead.—Upon this testimony, the Judge thought the absence of the papers sufficiently accounted for, and permitted their contents to be proved.

The Plaintiff further proved, that the negro at the sale, was delivered to him by the Constable, and was afterwards taken away by the Defendants.

The Constable then stated, in answer to a question put to him by the Defendant's counsel, that he had made to the Plaintiff a bill of sale for the negro, on which the Plaintiff's counsel, protesting that on the facts of the case, no bill of sale was necessary to pass the title, and therefore he was not bound to produce one, yet produced that spoken of by the witness, and proved its execution. To this bill of sale, it was objected that the Plaintiff resided in Chatham, and the registration was in Randolph. To which it was answered, that as the Defendant had been in possession of the negro, the registration in the county where he resided and where the sale was made, was sufficient.

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The Judge held first, that no bill of sale was necessary to be shown, and secondly, if necessary, the registration was in the proper county, and the bill of sale was read.

A verdict being found for the Plaintiff, a new trial refused, and judgment entered on the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

Nash, for the Appellant, submitted the case without argument, no counsel appearing on the other side.

HALL, Judge.—The rule for a new trial seems to have been obtained on the ground that evidence ought not to have been received of the contents of the judgment and executions, unless their absence had been better accounted for. It appeared that *McNeill*, the real Plaintiff in the judgment, and the Justice of the Peace who rendered the judgment and issued the executions, had both removed from the state, and that ordinary diligence had been used in searching for the papers. I therefore think with the Judge below, that it was proper to receive evidence of their contents.

It appears that the deed from the Constable, who sold the negro in dispute to the Plaintiff, was objected to as evidence by Defendant's counsel, because it had not been registered in the county where the Plaintiff lived, but only in the county where the sale took place. This objection is sustained by the case of *Palmer* v. *Popleston*, decided in this Court, (1 *Hawks* 307) there, as in this case, a bill of sale made by the Sheriff, was registered in the county where the sale was made, but not in the county where the vendee lived; it was held there, and we must so decide here, that as the deed was not registered in the county where the vendee lived, as required by the act of 1792, (*Rev. ch.* 363,) there must be a new trial, and the rule for that purpose be made absolute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and new trial.

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Daniel Lamon
v.
Archibald Gilchrist, adm'r. &c. } From Robeson.

Where a Justice forgets to return an appeal at the next term after the judgment, it is proper, upon notice to the appellee, to return it and place the case on the trial docket at a subsequent term.

An appeal from a justice, granted on security given, two days after the judgment, will not be dismissed, although allowed without affidavits, and although no entry appears, that at the trial, time was given to the Plaintiff to find sureties.

By the act of 1777, c. 15, commonly called "the Court law" at section 63, it is provided that either party dissatisfied with the judgment of a Justice of the Peace, may appeal to the next County Court, *first* giving security for prosecuting his appeal with effect; and by an act passed in 1794, (*Rev. c.* 414,) the same provision is re enacted. By the 3d section of an act to amend the latter, passed in 1802, (*Rev. c.* 609,) it is enacted, that whenever it shall happen, that judgment is entered against either Plaintiff or Defendant "*he, she or they, not being present,*" that at any time within ten days after the judgment, the person or persons against whom such judgment was given, on making oath before any justice, &c. "*that he, she or they, was or were prevented from attending on the day of trial,* by bodily infirmity, mistaking the day of trial, or other *sufficient reason,*" may have an appeal to the next County Court, &c. and it is made the duty of the Justice granting the appeal to issue a written order to the Constable, &c. having the judgment in his hands, to return the same to him, and to give notice to the opposite party in the cause of such appeal being granted, and on receiving such judgment, it is made the duty of the Justice to make return thereof, together with the "*affidavit of the party craving the appeal,*" to the next Court, &c. And by the first section of an act passed in 1812, (*Rev. c.* 832,) it is enacted, that when a judg-

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ment is given by a Justice against any person who wishes to appeal, &c. and is unprovided with securities upon the day of trial, such Justice may grant ten days to give security for the appeal, and "*shall make an entry thereof upon the warrant.*"

At March Term, 1826, of the Superior Court of Robeson, (in which county, the Superior Court has jurisdiction of appeals from Justices judgments) one of the Justices of the Peace returned a warrant, judgment, &c. between the Plaintiff and Defendant. The judgment which was indorsed on the warrant, was for costs against the Plaintiff, and was rendered July 27, 1825, and the only other entry appearing on the warrant, was signed by the Justice, and was in these words, "the Plaintiff appeared and craves an appeal to prosecute suit according to law, by giving *Archibald Currie* security, this being granted to him 29th July, 1825." At the same term at which these proceedings were returned, the Plaintiff made a written affidavit, that the Justice had promised him to return the appeal at September Term, 1825, (being the next term after the judgment) but the Justice, who attended as a Juror at that term, and resided at the distance of 28 miles from the Court-House, alleged to the Plaintiff, who attended on the last day of the term, with a view of prosecuting the appeal, that he had forgotten to bring it up. Upon this affidavit, the Plaintiff moved for and obtained an order that notice should issue to the Defendant to appear at next term and defend the suit, when before his honor Judge DONNELL, the Defendant appeared and moved to dismiss the appeal, because if the Plaintiff was present on the trial, it did not appear on the proceedings that he then signified his wish to appeal, or that time was then given to find sureties according to the act of 1812, and because if the Plaintiff was absent, no affidavit was taken to account for his absence as directed by the act of

1802. The Plaintiff offered to prove by a witness, that he did pray an appeal on the day of trial, and obtained time to give sureties; but the Judge refused to hear *parol* evidence thereof, and dismissed the appeal, from which judgment, the Plaintiff appealed to this Court.

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HALL, Judge.—It was not the fault of the Plaintiff that the appeal was not returned to the Court to which it was returnable. At that Court, the Justice whose duty it was to return it, attended as a Juror, he lived 28 miles from Court, and that was probably the reason why he could not then return it, having forgot to carry it with him when he first went to Court. The Defendant was notified of the motion that would be made to enter the appeal on the trial docket, and is now party to the proceedings, there is no hardship on the Defendant in granting a new trial, but in refusing it, an injury may be done the Plaintiff. I therefore think the ends of justice will be better answered, by setting aside the dismission of the appeal and granting a new trial, and that the rule granted for that purpose, should be made absolute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and rule absolute for placing the cause on the trial docket.

Henry Wilkes
v.
William M. Clark. } From Hertford.

In an action of assumpsit against a carrier for damage to goods, a dormant partner need not join.

The Defendant had a boat commanded by one of his slaves, plying for freight on the river Roanoke, and a quantity of corn was shipped on board and delivered to the slave by one *John Wilkes*, to be carried to Plymouth

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for the customary freight. In this, *John Wilkes* acted as agent for the owner or owners, and it did not appear that any express agreement was made between him and the slave, or that the shipment was known either to the owners of the corn or of the boat. The corn having been damaged, this action was brought, in which the Plaintiff declared in *assumpsit*, and on the trial, before the late Judge PAXTON, the fact of the delivery and loss of the corn being shown, the Defendant's counsel read the deposition of one *W. H. Pugh*, and insisting that upon the facts therein stated, *Pugh* was joint owner of the corn, and should have been joined in the action, moved for a nonsuit. The material statement in this deposition, was, that the Plaintiff bought the corn of *John Wilkes*, and some time before the shipment, told *Pugh* that he should have to pay for it before he could get it to market, and was not in funds to do so—*Pugh* offered to let him have money to pay for one half of the corn, upon an agreement that the Plaintiff should receive and dispose of the corn in his own name as though *Pugh* had no interest in it, and after the sale, should return the money with one-half the profits. To this proposal, the Plaintiff agreed, and received the money from *Pugh*. The advance of money was not a gift or a loan, but was put into the Plaintiff's hands to pay for half the corn, the money and half the profits to be returned as stated above, and the witness said that in the event of loss, he should have felt himself bound in honor to sustain half of it. The whole of the transaction between the Plaintiff and *Pugh*, was entirely private.

The presiding Judge refused to direct a nonsuit, and instructed the Jury to find for the Plaintiff, who accordingly had a verdict and judgment.

Hogg & Badger, for Defendant,

1st. *Pugh* was a joint owner of the corn. Every person who has a joint interest in property is a joint owner.

The case states that *Pugh* did not lend or give the amount of his advance to *Wilkes*, of necessity, he must have bought one half of the corn. If it had been totally lost, and nothing ever realized from it, he must have submitted to that loss; he could only look to it for a return of his advance, and of course, must have been a joint owner of it.

2d. It cannot be denied as a general rule, that all who are concerned in interest, must join in an action on a contract concerning that joint interest. The exceptions are, where there is a dormant partner and where the name of the copartners is not disclosed. These exceptions result from privity of contract. Where there is no such privity, and the right of action results from implication of law, all who are jointly interested, must join as Plaintiffs. (1 *Chitty's Pleading* 5, 7—*Graham* v. *Roberson*, 2 *D. & E.* 282—*Waugh* v. *Carver*, 2 *H. Blk.* 235, *Lloyd* v. *Archbole*, 2 *Taun.* 324—*Skinner* v. *Stocks*, 4 *B. & A.* 437.)

In this case, there was no express agreement at all, unless the deposit amounted to one, and if so, *John Wilkes* and not the Plaintiff, is the party thereto. The only right in any other to sue, is founded on ownership, the law implying a promise to the owner, where there is no express contract with another. But here the ownership being joint in the Plaintiff and *Pugh*, the promise implied is a joint promise to them both, and no reason can be conceived why the Plaintiff, more than *Pugh*, should sue alone; it appearing expressly, that *John Wilkes* acted not as the agent of the former, but as the agent of the owner or owners, whoever they were.

Gaston, for the Plaintiff, contended, that a person having an interest in profits, became a partner only as to creditors, for the purpose of giving them a better security for their debts. (*Gow on Partnership*, 14, 15, 23—*Hoskith* v. *Blanchard*, 4 *East.* 144—*Morse* v. *Wilson*, 4

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D. & E. 353—*Waugh* v. *Carver*, 2 *H. Blk.* 255—*Dol* v. *Halsey*, 16 *Johns.*) But as to debtors, it was indifferent whether a dormant partner joined or not, and his non-joinder was no ground of nonsuit, because the contract was made with the acting partner, the Plaintiff in the action. If he joined, which he might do, his joinder did not affect any defence which existed against the acting partner alone. (*Gow* 13 153 154—*Skinner* v. *Stocks*, 4 *B. & A.* 437—*Lloyd* v. *Archbole*, 2 *Taun.* 324—*Levick* v. *Shaftoe*, 2 *Esp. N. P. Cas.* 468—*Carr* v. *Hinchliff*, 4 *B. and C.* 547.)

He denied that the difference alleged on the other side, between contracts expressed, and contracts implied, was sanctioned by authority or supported by reason. The law implied the promise to the acting partner or the ostensible owner, and here, though *Pugh* and the Plaintiff, as between themselves, and where third persons wished to charge them respecting the property, were joint owners; yet in other respects, the Plaintiff was the sole owner, and might sue without joining *Pugh*.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—The question to be decided in this case is, whether the Superior Court erred in refusing to instruct the jury, that *Pugh* had such an interest in the corn, that he should have joined in the action brought by *Wilkes*, and that *Wilkes* alone could not maintain it; and my opinion on the case, and *Pugh's* deposition is, that there was no error committed by the Court in refusing this instruction.

The agreement made between the Plaintiff and *Pugh*, took place one or two months after the former had purchased the corn from *John Wilkes*, and it was a part of that agreement, that the Plaintiff was to receive and dispose of the corn, in his own name, in the same manner as if *Pugh* had nothing to do with it. The agreement to this effect was private between them, and *Pugh* thinks

it was unknown to any other person. It was consequently unknown to *John Wilkes*, when he shipped the corn, who must have believed that he was acting as the agent of, and for the sole account of the Plaintiff *Henry Wilkes*. If therefore, when he made the shipment, an express contract had been made between him and the carrier, it must have been made in the name of his brother, and would have enured to his benefit; for the law will only imply that, which it may be supposed the parties would have expressed, had they defined the terms of the agreement.

It follows, that *John Wilkes* was the agent for the Plaintiff alone, and that the latter was unknown in the contract of shipment. The case then falls within the rule, that the party with whom the contract was made, may alone sustain the action, although it turn out that another person, whose name is not mentioned, is secretly interested. Thus in the case of *Lloyd* v. *Archbole*, (2 *Taunton* 324) it was held that it is no ground of nonsuit in an action on a contract, that a dormant partner, who is not privy to the contract, and is not party to the suit, partakes of the benefit of the contract, and therefore ought to be joined as Plaintiff. The Court in that case, holding that the only ostensible partner who made the contract, was the only proper Plaintiff; for the only acting partner might owe much money to the Defendant, which the Defendant might set off; but if the Plaintiff and the dormant partner had sued, that debt of the acting partner could not be set off. "If you can find out a dormant partner Defendant, you may make him pay, because he has had the benefit of your work; but a person with whom you have no privity of communication in your contract, shall not sue you," (*Ibid.*) To the same effect are the cases cited from 2 *Esp. c.* 468—1 *M. & S.* 249, and several others.

Upon general principles, I think that *Pugh* was a partner with the Plaintiff, for though nothing was expressed

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relative to a possible loss, yet he who takes a moiety of the profits, shall by operation of law be made liable to the losses; and since by sharing the profits, he lessens that fund which is properly liable to the creditors for the payment of the debts, he is justly responsible to them. In such a case, it is not competent for a person having an interest in the profits, to withdraw his share from the liability, and deny his being a partner. The question in many cases, is susceptible of different views, whether considered in relation to the parties themselves, or to third persons dealing with them. There may be a partnership as respects third persons, when the transaction would not be considered such, among the parties themselves. Indeed, there may be cases, in which it is the undoubted intention of the parties to the contract, that they should not be partners, as that one is to contribute neither labour or money, nor to receive any of the profits, yet if by lending his name as a partner, he gives credit to the house, he cannot, as against creditors, deny his being a partner, otherwise the greatest frauds might be practised. But it is needless to pursue this enquiry, for though I think that *Pugh* would have been considered as a partner, in respect to creditors, I am of opinion that he cannot join in the action as Plaintiff, for the reasons above stated.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

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William Humphreys
v.
John R. Buie. } From Richmond.

Where the facts in a special verdict are not sufficient to dispose of all the issues submitted to the jury, no judgment can be given thereon, but a "*venire facias de novo*" should be awarded.

This action was commenced the 20th of April, 1824, by warrant from a Justice, to recover the amount of a former Justice's judgment, and was brought by appeal to the Superior Court of Richmond, where it was tried at Spring term, 1827.

The pleas were "general issue, statute of limitations, former suit and retraxit therein." And the Jury, by a special verdict, found the judgment and that a former suit thereupon was at March 1825, "dismissed." The Court below, upon this verdict, rendered judgment for the Plaintiff, from which the Defendant appealed to this Court.

HALL, Judge.—I think the special verdict ought to have been set aside in the Superior Court, because the jury have not found all the facts arising on the issues submitted to them, nor have they found facts on which the Court can award judgment for either party, neither the finding of the jury or the judgment of the Court, show what disposition was made of the statute of limitations, which the Defendant pleaded. The act of 1820, (*Rev.* c. 1053) makes three years a bar to a judgment obtained before a Justice.

A "*venire facias de novo*" should be awarded by the Superior Court, and the suit must be remanded for that purpose.

PER CURIAM. Judgment reversed and *venire de novo* ordered.

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Jacob Loubz
v.
Joseph Hafner & another. } From Lincoln.

Trespass *vi et armis*, is the proper remedy for an injury of which the Defendant is the immediate cause, though it happen by accident or misfortune. *Therefore*, for beating a drum in the highway, where a wagon and team are passing, by which the horses take fright, run away and damage the wagon, this action may be supported by the owner.

The Plaintiff declared in trespass *vi et armis*, and on the trial before STRANGE, Judge, offered to prove that as he was passing with his wagon on the highway, the Defendants came into the road (but not so as to interrupt the Plaintiff's progress) and commenced beating a drum for the purpose of frightening his horses, whereupon they took fright, ran away, and damaged the Plaintiff's wagon, &c. but the presiding Judge being of opinion that case, and not trespass, was the proper remedy, the Defendants had a verdict. A new trial was afterwards moved and denied, and the Plaintiff appealed.

In this Court, *Wilson*, for the Plaintiff, submitted the case without argument, no counsel appearing for the Appellee.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—All the authorities concur in the position, that whenever the injury is committed by the immediate act complained of, the action must be trespass; in other words, "if the injurious act be the immediate result of the force originally applied by the Defendant, it is the subject of an action of trespass *vi et armis*, by all the cases ancient and modern, and that it is immaterial whether the injury be wilful or not." Several cases are put to illustrate this rule, as when one shooting at a mark with a bow and arrow, and having no unlawful purpose in view, wounded a man, it was

held that *trespass* was the proper action. So where a person is lawfully exercising himself in arms, and happen to wound another, the same action must be brought, (*Hob.* 134.) In actions of trespass, the distinction has not turned either on the lawfulness of the act from whence the injury happened, or the design of the party doing it, to commit the injury; but on the difference between immediate injuries or consequential ones. For if the injury be done by the act of the party himself at the time, or he be the immediate cause of it, though it happen accidentally or by misfortune, yet he is answerable in trespass, (3 *East.* 600).

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It is impossible to doubt from the statement in this case, that the action is properly brought according to all the decisions. For if wilfulness were a necessary ingredient in the case, it exists here, since the Defendant beat the drum for the purpose of frightening the Plaintiff's horses. It is much stronger than the case of *Scott* v. *Shepherd*, for here the act was immediately injurious, without any intermediate agency. If in the case of *Scott* v. *Shepherd*, the injury had been done to the person upon whom the squib first alighted, it would have resembled the case before us, and then there would have been no grounds for the dissenting opinion of Mr. Justice [illegible]-stone, who thought that the first act was complete when the squib lay on the stall where it first fell, and that the injury done to the Plaintiff after the squib had received two new directions, was the consequence of, and not done *immediately* by the first act of the Defendant.

The nature of the act done in this case, the time and place where it was done, a wagon and team passing the public road, rendered it probable that injury would be the immediate consequence, and would render the Defendant liable in the action, though he had no views to the consequences. For though the bad intention must be alleged and proved in a charge of felony, it is not ne-

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cessary to be considered in this action. "Where a man shoots with a bow at a mark and kills a man, it is not felony, and it should be construed, that he had no intent to kill him, but when he wounds a man although that it be against his will, he shall be said to be a trespasser," (3 *Wils.* 408). If the injury done be not inevitable, the person who doth it, or is the immediate cause thereof, even by accident, misfortune, and against his will, is answerable in this action of trespass *vi et armis*. (1 *Strange* 596—*Sir T. Jones* 205—*Sir T. Raym.* 422). For these reasons, I am of opinion, that upon every ground of law and convenience, as well as the most manifest justice in the particular case, the action was well brought, and the Plaintiff on the proof offered, should have had a verdict.

PER CURIAM. Judgment reversed, and new trial awarded.

James L. Armstrong & another
v.
John Harshaw.
} From Burke.

A judgment against a Defendant named in the writ, but not made a party either by service, public notice or attaching his estate, is merely void, and should be disregarded when produced on *nul tiel record*.

DEBT—The Plaintiffs declared upon a judgment recovered in the State of Tennessee, and the Defendant pleaded "*nul tiel record.*" On the trial, before STRANGE Judge, the Plaintiff produced a duly certified transcript of proceedings had in Bedford county, in Tennessee, by which it appeared on an affidavit made by the Plaintiffs, that the Defendant had absconded or concealed himself so that process could not be served on him, a writ of attachment issued against his estate, which was

levied on a quantity of corn, supposed to be his property, and the levy indorsed on the writ; and an order was made to sell the corn, upon which the officer returned that no money had been made in consequence of older attachments having been previously levied on the same corn. At the succeeding term of the Court, the writ being returned with these indorsements, the Plaintiffs filed their declaration, signed judgment by default, and their damages being assessed by a jury at the next term, a final judgment was entered.

On the production of this record, the presiding Judge gave judgment for the Plaintiffs, and the Defendant appealed.

Wilson, for the Defendant, submitted the case without argument.

HALL, Judge.—The constitution and laws of the country, guaranty the principle, that no freeman shall be divested of a right by the judgment of a Court, unless he shall have been made party to the proceeding in which it shall have been obtained. When personal notice cannot be given, it must be dispensed with from necessity, and that must be done which is next most likely to answer the same purpose, public notice must be given, or the Defendant's property must be laid hold of. The latter mode was directed and attempted to be adopted in the present case, and had it succeeded, the Plaintiff would have been authorised to proceed to judgment, because the property when levied upon, represented its owner, and of course, was liable to that judgment, but no property of the Defendant was levied upon, his right to the corn was divested by older process, and judgment was obtained against him when he was not made party to the proceedings in any way known to the law.

I cannot therefore, consider it a sufficient and legal foundation for the judgment rendered in this case. I am

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consequently of opinion, that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and new trial awarded.

The Trustees of the Quaker Society of Contentnea *v.* William Dickenson. } From Wayne.

By the act of 1796, religious societies or their trustees, have not a general capacity of acquisition, they can only take for the use of the society.

Hence, by a conveyance of slaves to the trustees, for purposes forbidden by the policy of the law, nothing passes, and in an action brought in their name to recover such slaves against a stranger, he may, by parol, show the unlawful purpose in contradiction of the deed.

It seems, that even a party might offer such proof, for, as deeds conclude the parties only when valid, they cannot exclude proof of an unlawful design, which avoids them.

The action was detinue, brought in the name of *Joseph Borden* and fourteen other persons, styling themselves "Trustees of the Religious Society or Congregation of Christians, called Friends or Quakers, of the Contentnea Quarterly Meeting, &c." to recover a negro slave, and was tried before his honor Judge RUFFIN, at April Term, 1826. On the trial, it appeared that in November 1817, one *William Dickenson* the elder, executed a deed, by which he conveyed the negro slave in question and others, "to *Thomas Cox*, *Joseph Borden* and *Francis Mace*, Trustees of the Religious Society and Congregation, usually known by the name of Quakers, &c." to have and to hold to them, Trustees as aforesaid and their successors "*for the use and benefit of, and in trust for the said Religious Society and Congregation, for-*

ever." It was admitted that the persons named in the deed as Trustees, were duly appointed such, according to the act of assembly of 1796, and that the Plaintiffs are their successors in that office or appointment. It was then proved by one *Elijah Coleman*, the subscribing witness to the deed, that the religious principles of the people called Quakers, forbid them to hold to the use of themselves individually, or to the use of the society any persons as slaves beneficially as property, or for purposes of profit—that it was the intent of *Dickenson*, *Cox*, *Borden* and *Mace*, parties to the deed, as well as of the Society, that neither the Trustees nor the Society should have any profitable or beneficial use of the slaves, but that the Trustees as a sort of guardians of the slaves, should hold them in the name of the Society for the benefit of the slaves themselves, they working under the direction of the Trustees and entitled to receive the profits of their labor, after defraying the expenses attending their comfortable maintenance—and to be ultimately emancipated by the Society or Trustees, whenever it could be effected according to the laws of this state. The witness being asked if it was not intended that the slaves might be sent out of the state to be emancipated, answered, that nothing was said by the parties as to such a disposition of them, but he understood it to be the intention that they should remain in North-Carolina until emancipated, and then to choose their own places of residence.

The presiding Judge was of opinion, that the Plaintiffs as Trustees, could take and hold *only* property conveyed and *intended* for the use of the Society, and that a conveyance to the Trustees, expressed on its face to be for the use of the Society, but in fact for the benefit of some other person, was not valid—that the use required, must be one actually *beneficial* to the Society, who could not constitute its Trustees or itself, trustee for third persons,

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and at all events, not for the uses and purposes specified by the witness. The Judge was also of opinion, that evidence of such beneficial use, for the Society, formed a necessary part of the Plaintiffs' case, and though such use was *prima facie* to be inferred from the declaration in the deed, yet if the Jury believed from the testimony of the witness, that no *beneficial* use to the Society was intended, but that the conveyance was made for the other purposes stated by the witness, the Plaintiffs had not a title to the slave and were not entitled to a verdict.

The counsel for the Plaintiff submitting to this opinion of the Court, the Plaintiffs were called, and a motion to set aside the nonsuit having been refused, appealed to this Court.

Gaston, for the Appellants,

The enquiry is in a Court of Law, which cannot examine into the invalidity of trusts, but can only ask whether the Plaintiffs have a legal title.

The amount of the charge is, that a religious society shall not take property which they are not to derive a benefit from, or that it cannot take what it cannot enjoy. The capacity of the corporation must be such as the law gives it; the act of 1796, c. 457, and 1809, c. 70, makes the Trustees mere agents of the Society, the property rests in the Society. The capacity of taking is only limited as to realty. So far then, as a legal capacity in any person to take personal property exists, so far has this Society a right to take.

That the Society did not in fact, derive any benefit from the property, can make no difference, for many things which religious societies do, are not done with a view to profit, and there is no profit in much of the property which they hold.

If the Judge had laid down the rule, that they should only hold such property as they used in their religious worship, perhaps the idea might be correct.

The Judge's opinion was probably founded upon dicta in the books, that corporations cannot hold in trust, (1 *Plow.* 103). But if they cannot hold in trust, they can hold discharged of the trust. The rule however, is confined to a technical *use*, and was adopted to prevent alienations in mortmain; applies exclusively to land and not at all to personalty. (*Com. Fran. F.* 10, 15, 17.)

But if they can take personalty unlimitedly as an individual, where is the principle which prevents them from receiving it for the benefit of others; and it cannot be contended at this day, that corporations cannot be controlled in Equity.

This however, is a question beside the main one, for that is, whether the corporation had a legal capacity to take. The enquiry whether the trust is good or bad, is proper for a Court of Equity only. By this instrument, the ownership of this negro passed directly to the Society, the Trustees had nothing to do with it except as agents.

The Defendant however, has shown no title, and if the doctrine held by the Court below is correct, the negroes belong to nobody, for *Dickenson*, the grantor, cannot claim them.

The instrument upon its face is valid, and parol evidence cannot be introduced to prove a trust different from that declared upon its face.

If it be said that parol evidence is used to impeach a bond, when it is averred that the consideration is against law, as usury, gaming, &c. Fraud is the ground which is objected to in these cases.

The trust however, is not illegal, for no man is obliged to make a profit of his slaves; if they roam about they may be hired out, and the owner is liable for them civily; but he is not obliged to make a profit out of them.

All the cases in which bills in equity have been filed to set aside devises of slaves for the purpose of emanci-

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pation, and declare a resulting trust in the next of kin proceed upon the ground, that the legal estate is complete.

The charge is a repeal of the act of 1796.

Badger, contra.—The Judge was right in nonsuiting the Plaintiffs, for no title passed by the deed, the property not being intended for the "use of the Society." It is supposed on the other side, that the Society is the *quasi* corporation under the act of 1796; but it is believed by us that the Trustees and not the Society are vested with the corporate rights granted by the act. This is shown by its phraseology—by the 1st section, the Trustees and their successors "are vested with power to purchase and *hold in trust* for the Society," and "to receive gifts, &c. for the *use* and *benefit* of the Society." By the 2d section the Trustees are "to sue and be sued," and by the third, the mode in which the Trustees are to be called to account, is by other persons, to be elected by the society for that purpose. In the two first, is clearly recognized the distinction between the legal estate in the Trustees and the beneficial interest in the Society—the former holding and receiving, to the use of, in trust for or for the benefit of, the latter—provisions inconsistent with immediate corporate rights and a legal estate in the Society—and if these exist, why provide by the last section for the appointment of other persons to call the former Trustees to account?

The case is analogous to that of churchwardens in England, who are the representatives of the congregation as to personalty, while the clergyman is the "*persona ecclesias*" as to the church and the glebe. The former, though not in the fullest sense a corporation, have yet corporate rights as to the goods of the church, and as to them, take in succession, and have a capacity to sue, and the congregation for whose benefit they have these privile-

ges, can call them to account for misconduct or abuse only by appointing for that purpose, others to represent them. (*Com. Dig. Eglise F.* 43—1 *Blac. Com.* 394, 395.)

Whether, however, the capacity to hold, be in the Trustees or the Society, is not deemed material to our argument, which though framed on the supposition of the former, will, it is hoped, be found conclusive against the Plaintiffs in either view.

The Plaintiffs then, were not entitled to recover, because they were not parties to the deed, so nothing passed to them as natural persons, and as Trustees, they cannot claim as successors to the parties thereto, because nothing passed to them in their artificial character as Trustees. They are authorized to purchase, hold and receive, *to the use and for the benefit of the Society*, and for no other use. It is said, that the deed conveys the legal estate to them, and if the trust be liable to any objection, it must be urged in another former. This would be true if the Plaintiffs sued as natural persons, or if they were a corporation vested by law with a general capacity to take; but here they have a certain limited and particular capacity, clearly specified and exactly defined, no other capacity is expressed, and to infer a general capacity from a particular grant would be manifestly unwarranted. Itisnot then a question to be settled in equity, if the trust is good; but the true enquiry is, does the estate pass at law? That depends on whether the Trustees had a capacity to take and by the provisions of the law, that capacity is suspended upon the character of the use. If the use is within the statute, the Trustees take, if not, their capacity being derived solely from the statute, they cannot take at all.

But it is said, shall a religious society be required to make a profit of all their estate or else forfeit it, and if not, where is the limit of the humane and charitable purposes, to which they may apply it? Suppose they should

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choose to support a mission to convert the heathen, surely this purpose, so sacred as a religious duty, is allowable? To this we answer, that no one supposes the Society is required to carry on trade or become lenders of money to make pecuniary gain, nor is this implied in any thing said by the Judge below; but it is contended by us, that the act of assembly being for *religious* societies, and securing property to their own *use and benefit*, the purposes within the act are only religious uses for the benefit of the Society itself—and that the legislature had no view to erect all religious congregations into corporations, for general purposes of charity and benevolence; and though it is difficult & even impossible, to state with clearness and precision, any rule which will at once determine the class to which all supposable cases ought to belong, because of the uncertainty of the boundaries which separate the departments of all moral subjects, yet we can have a rule sufficient to all practical purposes. The support of foreign missions, would be clearly out of the statute, which contemplates property held for "the use or benefit" of religious societies here—not held by the Societies here, for other persons abroad.—Again, a *free* school here, it is conceived would not be one of the uses mentioned in the act, for it is not a *religious* use, however benevolent. The uses intended are, the support of a preacher, the erection of a place of worship and other purposes of a like kind. But however this may be, the use in the present case, is neither religious nor charitable in its nature, nor for the benefit of the Society. The Trustees or the Society (it matters not which) are to employ the slaves, receive the proceeds of their labor, reimburse the expense incurred, and apply the residue for the exclusive benefit of the slaves themselves 'till they can be emancipated. The right of property can give to none more than the profits after paying the charges, and so the slaves are the proprietors

of themselves; the Society but the agents to superintend their labor, and keep their accounts. It is then a case of *substantial* emancipation, under the form of ownership, and comes exactly within the principle of *Haywood* v. *Craven's Ex'rs.* (2 *Car. L. R.* 557) and *Huckaby* v. *Jones*, (2 *Hawks* 120) in which this was held to be, in our state of society impolitic and unlawful. In those cases, the estate in the executors was good, and the trust only unlawful, because they had a general capacity to take—here the whole grant is void, there being no capacity to take, except for one purpose and that not intended. We are asked what becomes of the legal estate if it be not in the Trustees or the Society, the grantor being estopped? It is not conceded by us that the grantor is estopped. If he is, the slaves belong to the Trustees in their natural capacity, or are *bona vacantia* and belong to the state; but here we are not called on to show who is entitled, it is sufficient to show that the Plaintiffs are not.

It is objected that the evidence was inadmissible to show a purpose different from that expressed by the deed, and the rule is referred to "that parol evidence shall not be received to contradict a deed." To this objection there are three answers, each of them conclusive.

1. The rule referred to applies only to the parties to the deed, and those who claim under them, and the notion that strangers who claim nothing under a deed shall be concluded by it, is supposed to be entirely novel and unsupported by any authority. The deed when proved, is evidence that the parties to it said such things as it contains, and it is evidence thus far against all the world; but of the *truth* of the facts recited or supposed thereby, it is not evidence at all, except against parties and privies. If therefore the Judge was guilty of any error at all, it was in holding the recital to be even *prima facie* evidence against the Defendant, as to whom it was *res inter alias acta*.

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2. A party cannot estop himself from showing a fact or purpose unlawful or corrupt to avoid his deed. For the law which forbids the purpose and avoids the deed by which it is to be accomplished, would be untrue to itself if it permitted the deed to be so framed as to preclude the purpose from being shown. To forbid, and then to reject the proof of the matter forbidden, would be to frustrate the very policy which dictated the prohibition. Hence a man cannot by any recital in a bond, preclude himself from showing that the same was founded on a usurious or gaming consideration, or to suppress a prosecution; but to show this, he may, *by parol*, contradict the most solemn acknowledgments in a deed of a just and true consideration. If then the purpose of this conveyance was forbidden by law, no one, either party or stranger can be estopped by it.

3. The evidence was received without objection below, and therefore none can be taken here—for parol evidence to contradict a deed is not in an absolute sense inadmissible, it is always admissible by consent, and when no objection is stated, it is supposed to be heard by consent.

Gaston, in reply.—It is not material to enquire whether the acts of 1796 and 1809, incorporate the Society or the Trustees.

It is however, much more analogous to our institutions that the Society itself should be incorporated, and that the Trustees should be considered as its agents.

Any grant to a vill is an incorporation, as a grant to be free of a toll. (*Com. Fran. F.* 6.)

Frequently these corporations are directed to act through agents, while the whole community is the corporation, (*More.* 582) as in the case of the bank charters in this state.

The acts recognise the Society, it is to elect, the proviso restricting the power of holding lands, is upon

the Society, not upon the Trustees, recoveries made by them enure to the benefit of the Society, who may discharge their Trustees. The whole scope of the acts refers to the Society, all the enactments are for its benefit, and the Trustees are its agents, through whom its corporate will is expressed. But whether the Trustees or the Society is incorporated can make no difference, the question recurs, have the Association power to take property; this is a necessary incident to every corporation; it may be limited, but if no limitations are imposed, they can take to any extent. (1 *Blk.* 475--1 *Co.* 30--*Com. Franchise. F.* 10.)

Those who insist upon the want of capacity, must then prove the reverse of this clear right; no such is shown, nor can any be pointed out. It is said, that it may be inferred from the first section, authorising receipts for the use and benefit of the Society, that none can be received except those for the use and benefit of the Society; if by this is meant that none can be received, except such as the Society has the *dominium utile* in, it is admitted, but this is different from preventing it taking property from which it can derive no *profit*. The Society had the jus utendi, and what right they have, they can dispose of; this however is different from the construction which prevents them from holding property, from which they made no profit, (*Trustees of Phillips Academy* v. *King*, 12 *Mass.* 546.)

In donations to religious Societies, pecuniary emolument is rarely intended, as for instance in a gift to endow a free school.

But it is said, that the purpose for which this conveyance was made, is illegal, and that the law would not be true to itself, if it permitted the deed to stand. But no emancipation is intended, unless it be consistent with the laws—they are to be worked as slaves—governed as slaves—have no right of locomotion—not one violation of the law is intended, or is actually effected by the deed.

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It is a conveyance of slaves *as slaves*, and the only stipulation is, that if it shall be lawful hereafter to free them, they shall be emancipated.

But it is said, that the cases of *Haywood* v. *Craven* and *Huckaby* v. *Jones*, prove this to be illegal; but these cases only establish that where there is no trust declared in a devise, or one so vague as not be inforced; not that the legal estate does not pass, but that a Court of Equity will declare a trust. These devises were for mere *emancipation*—no equitable title or usufructory interest passed.

But where is the legal title? It is said, that it may have passed to the Trustees in their natural capacity, but the contract is, that the property should go to the artificial person, if that contract is ineffectual, it cannot be said that it shall enure to the individuals of the corporation naturally.

It is said, that they may be regarded as *bona vacantia*, this however creates a greater nuisance than any that can be imagined, and is still more liable to the *argumentum ab inconvenienti*.

The whole enquiry was irrelevant—the evidence inadmissible—the deed cannot be impeached, not upon the technical principle of estoppel, but because all persons are precluded from denying that a deed formally made, between persons having capacity, passes the title; and this rule is founded upon fundamental principles of policy as regards property.

But it is said, the consideration is illegal, and that its ill egality may be shown; there is a difference between executed and executory contracts. The conveyance is absolute, and has had its full effect—*at law*, it cannot be impeached, though if its purpose be unlawful, equity will interfere; but a bond is an executory agreement, and if founded on an illegal consideration, *no* Court will give it effect by enforcing its execution.

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TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The deed of gift executed to the three Trustees of the Friends Association does upon its face, convey the negroes to them for the purposes authorised by the act of 1796, and deciding from the conveyance alone, passes a valid title to them. But as the Defendant was a stranger to the deed, it is competent for him to give parol evidence of the real objects of the deed, and of the trusts it was intended to effect, beyond those expressed, (3 *Term Rep.* 474—8 *Term* 379—*Starkie on Ev. P.* 4, 1051—10 *Johns.* 229.)

Before the passing of the act of 1796, the Society of Friends had no capacity to acquire property as an Association, because they were not incorporated; they could take only in their individual characters, the gift being confined to the very persons in existence when it was made. To enable it to manage its own affairs and to own property for the exclusive use of the Society as a religious association, without the continual necessity of conveying it from one to another, the act of 1796 was passed. A corporation exists but in contemplation of law, and possesses those properties only which the law confers upon it. By the very act of incorporation, and without any special power to that purpose, it is incidental to it to acquire property. But as it is the creature of legislative will, it is competent for the Legislature to limit its capacities and powers, as it may think proper. It may withhold altogether its capacity to acquire property; it may consequently limit and restrain it to definite purposes. It cannot be said of the Trustees of this Society that they have a general power to purchase and hold property, because the act declares that they shall hold it in trust, for the *use* and *benefit* of the Society. If then the case discloses the fact that the Trustees hold this property for an use different from that of the Society, and for the benefit of persons not contemplated by the Legislature when they gave the power, and for objects

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that are not less adverse to the words and spirit of the act, than to the general policy of the law, I think it will follow that the Plaintiffs have no title to recover.

What are the real objects of the donation? The individuals composing this Society believe it to be repugnant to their religious principles to become the owners of slaves, and will not employ their labour to the profit and advantage of themselves, or of the Society. The Trustees were to act as guardians to the slaves, and to hold them for the *benefit* of the slaves themselves, who were to receive the surplus of the profits of their labour for their own emolument, and ultimately to emancipate them, whenever it could be done consistently with the laws of the State.

So far then from the Plaintiffs taking the property for the objects permitted by the act of 1796, it appears to me that nothing but the name is wanting to render it at once a complete emancipation; the Trustees are but nominally the owners, and it is merely colourable to talk of a future emancipation by law, for as none can be set free but for meritorious services, the idea that a collection of them will perform such services, under the construction which those terms in the act of 1777 have uniformly received, is quite chimerical.

It is said that the legislature could not mean that the Society should take no property, but such as it derived a pecuniary benefit from. Certainly that was not their intention; but it evidently was their intention that the property they were allowed to acquire should subserve in some way, the legitimate object of a religious association, which every man can comprehend when stated, though it may be difficult to give a definition that shall include the whole.

A place of worship, of interment, the support of a minister, the means of educating and assisting their poor members, and various other objects which yield no pe-

cuniary profit, we perceive at once to be within the scope of the permission.

But if a sense of religious obligation dictates to any Society the exercise of an enlarged benevolence, which however virtuous and just in the abstract, the policy of the law, founded on the duty of self preservation, has forbidden, it irresistibly follows that a transfer of property so directed, must be void.

Nor do I feel the force of the remark that the property belongs to the Society, that they may make profit out of it if they choose, or sell it or dispose of it in any way that another owner might. This is to presume that a Society not less remarkable for the purity of its principles, than for an unshaken steadfastness in maintaining them, will at once degenerate from their long tried morality. The whole history of the people called Quakers, shows that neither prosperity nor adversity, favour or persecution, or any known vicissitude of their condition, has ever interrupted the even tenor of their ways. I firmly believe, indeed I consider it morally certain, that if the Plaintiffs recover, this property will be disposed of in the manner described by the witness, and in no other.

It is true that an individual may purchase a slave from gratitude or affection, and afford him such indulgencies as to preclude all notion of profit. The right of acquiring property and of disposing of it in any way consistently with law, is one of the primary rights which every member of society enjoys. But when the law invests individuals or Societies with a political character and personality, entirely distinct from their natural capacity, it may also restrain them in the acquisition or uses of property. Our law allows the Trustees to hold them for the benefit of the Society, whereas in truth, they hold them for the benefit of the slaves themselves, and only in the name of the Society.

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I cannot distinguish this case, in principle, from the former decisions wherein trusts for the emancipation of slaves, have been held void in Equity, on the ground that the law had forbidden such attempts, except in the manner prescribed by the act of 1777. There, resort was necessarily had to equity, because the legal title passed to the executors; but here, as it is justly remarked by the Judge who tried the cause, evidence of the beneficial use for the Society, forms a necessary part of the Plaintiffs title, of which, though the deed is *prima facie* evidence, it is not conclusive.

Upon the whole, my opinion is, that the Plaintiffs have no legal title, and although the province of this Court is to administer the law as they find it, without any regard to consequences, yet my judgment is in some degree fortified by the belief that a contrary decision would produce most, if not all, of the ill effects which the Legislature sought to avoid by the act of 1777.

If that law could be eluded by transferring slaves to this Society, there is no foreseeing to what extent the mischief might be carried. Numerous collections of slaves, having nothing but the name, and working for their own benefit, in the view and under the continual observation of others who are compelled to labour for their owners, would naturally excite in the latter, discontent with their condition, encourage idleness and disobedience, and lead possibly in the course of human events to the most calamitous of all contests, a *bellum servile*.

Henderson, Judge.—What may be the effect of the deed of *William Dickenson* to *Thomas Cox*, and the other original donees, viewing them merely as individual or natural persons, we are not called on to say. The form of the action, or rather the party Plaintiffs necessarily brings into discussion its validity under the act of 1796,

authorising religious societies to purchase and hold property; for without the aid of that or some other act creating them a corporate or artificial body, the present Plaintiffs cannot sustain this action, there being no privity or connection between some of the present Plaintiffs and the original grantees. By that act religious societies are not made corporate bodies with unlimited and unqualified powers of acquisition, for were that the case, it is admitted that the use or trust upon which they held their acquisition, would not affect their legal title. If the use or trust was vague or unlawful, it would be a reason why it should result to some other person or for some other purpose, but such modification of the *use* would not affect the legal ownership; because in this case the Trustees having a general and unqualified capacity to acquire property, as individuals or natural persons, the use or trusts upon which such acquisitions were held with such bodies, as with natural persons, would not affect their estates at law. The act of 1796, however, does not confer a general and unqualified power of acquisition, but only a limited and restricted one, to-wit, for the use and benefit of the Society; it is therefore the use which gives to the transaction its artificial character, by bringing to its aid the act of 1796, if such use is for the religious Society. The Society (either itself or its Trustees, which is immaterial as regards this question) are invested with corporate or artificial qualities, qualities commensurate with the object in view, but if the use or trust is not for themselves as a religious Society, but for others, they can derive no aid from the act. They must then rest on their rights as individuals or natural persons, and it would seem to follow as a most necessary consequence, if this *use* is *forbidden by law*, if it is contrary to the policy of the state, that the transaction can derive no aid from *an act of the Legislature by which the use, and the use only, gives character and vali-*

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duty to the deed. In saying that it is the use which gives character and validity to the deed, I mean not to assume the power of examining into the question, whether the use is actually beneficial to the religious Society or not, it is sufficient that they as a religious Society think it so; of this they are the sole and exclusive judges; but when the question is presented to me, it is my duty to see that such use does not violate the laws or policy of the state, and I think in this case, the use offered to be shown on the part of the Defendant, from an examination into which the Plaintiffs shrunk, and which must therefore (if the testimony is admissible) be taken as true, is forbidden by law, is contrary to the policy and hostile to the best interests of the state. It is contrary to law to permit slaves to hire their own time, the pernicious effect this must produce on our slaves is too obvious to require illustration; neither is any person permitted to emancipate his slave by his own act, it requires the sanction of the constituted authorities of the state to effect it, and no one I think, can for a moment, doubt the policy of these acts. I must also confess, after a careful examination of the case, that I can discover no difference in effect, so far as regards the evil example to our slaves, between hiring to them their own time, and placing them on farms, and giving to them what they make after deducting the expenses of supporting them; and no great difference between emancipating them, and holding them in the above mentioned manner, until they can be emancipated. It must produce dissatisfaction and a restless spirit among others, the very evils the Legislature designed to prevent. There can be nothing, I think, in the objection that the uses and purposes for which this Society hold these slaves, not being expressed in the deed, averments supported by parol evidence are inconsistent with it, and therefore inadmissible to show what those uses are; in the first place, they are not inconsistent with

the deed, the deed being general. But even between the parties to a deed any averment may be made, and of course proof received, to show its nullity. When strangers are concerned, and how this Defendant claims does not appear, consequently we must view him as a stranger, such averments are very clearly admissible. The recitals in a deed can bind the parties only, when it is taken as valid, but in endeavoring to show that it is void, its recitals and affirmations may be disproved by any one, either party or stranger, otherwise the parties by false recitals, can protect the most unlawful contracts from scrutiny.

HALL, Judge, *dissentiente*.—The act of 1796, ch. 457, authorises religious societies and congregations to appoint Trustees, who may purchase lands and receive donations for their use and benefit, and after such purchase or donation, the Society is declared to possess the absolute estate of all such property. The principal and only qualification required by the act, is that the Society shall be a religious one.

But it is stated in this case, that it is contrary to the religious principles of the Association of Friends, to hold slaves to their own use, and it is argued, that on that account the conveyance is void, under which they claim the slave in question.

I do not understand from that statement that they are averse from holding a title to slaves, or from being considered as having a right to the use of them, but that in point of law they may have the legal title, and a right to the use, but they claim the right of disposing of that use in any way they may think proper, provided that disposition does not conflict with the laws of the land.

That they may gratify their thirst for gain with it, or render it subservient to the gratification of any other desire not prohibited by law—that the enjoyment of the use

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consists in the freedom of disposing of it—that it is optional with them to build churches, employ preachers or give it away in charity in any other way their consciences approve of.

Preachers, individually, have the capacity to purchase slaves, and when they become owners of them are, like other citizens, subject to the laws made for their government, and when they form themselves into religious Societies, the Legislature confers upon them the capacity to purchase, the transfer of power is general. The Legislature have made no exceptions on account of religious tenets, and it appears to me not to be the province of this Court to discriminate and make any. As to their liberation of them, for which purpose it is said they purchase them, it can be effected only in the way pointed out by law, and when it can be effected in that way they have a right in common with other citizens; to avail themselves of it. If they permit them to hire their own time or otherwise mismanage them, they are like other citizens, amenable to the law for such conduct. It is not for this Court, by legal anticipation, to apply a preventive remedy.

If we take a step into the moral world and contemplate the unbiassed principles of our nature, we will discover for the exercise of our discretion a wide range between humanity and cruelty, and we might not find fault with those who mingled with their religion the dictates of the one and carefully abstained from the exercise of the other.

But if on account of our unfortunate connection with slavery, these sentiments tend to a mistaken policy, if self preservation impels us to a different and contrary course, that *course* should be pointed out by the Legislature; the mischief and the remedy are both with them. If the act of 1796 hath produced the one, they can, by some other act furnish the other.

Therefore the best consideration I have been able to give this case, results in a conviction that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute.

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Bufferlow v. Newsom.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

Dea on demise of Wm. Bufferlow v. Richard Newsom. } From Northampton.

A widow remaining in possession as widow, of lands occupied by her husband in his life, is bound by an estoppel, which bound her husband.

A jury is bound by an estoppel, and the Court will disregard a finding contrary thereto, except where the party entitled to the estoppel has waived it by mispleading.

EJECTMENT, tried before RUFFIN, Judge, when a verdict was taken subject to the opinion of the Court upon the following case:

One *Jesse Webb* being seised, and in the actual possession of the premises in dispute, on the 16th March, 1817, conveyed to one *John D. Amis* in fee *upon trust*, to sell and pay a debt due to one *William Amis*, if *Webb* should fail to pay. On the 30th October, 1820, *Webb* having fully paid the debt, *W. Amis* executed to him a release of the same, and also of all claim to the land. No sale or conveyance was ever made by *J. D. Amis*, and *Webb* continuing in possession with the consent of both *William* and *John*, on the 30th September, 1820, sold and conveyed to the lessor of the Plaintiff in fee simple, with general warranty. After this sale and conveyance, *Webb* still continued in possession of the land by leave of the lessor of the Plaintiff, (though without any formal or express lease for any particular time) and cultivated it until March, 1821, when he died. *Mary*, the widow of

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Webb, after his death, remained (without any allotment of dower) with the other members of his family, in possession, setting up no other title than such as she had under her husband, until November, 1823, when she intermarried with the Defendant *Newsom*, who thereupon, as her husband, entered into possession, setting up no other title than that of his wife.

Upon this case it was agreed, if in the opinion of the Court, the Defendant was estopped to set up the outstanding legal title in *John D. Amis*, to defeat the action, then the verdict to stand; otherwise the verdict to be set aside and a nonsuit entered.

The presiding Judge was of opinion with the Plaintiff, and from the judgment rendered upon the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

In this Court, the case was submitted without argument, by *Seawell*, for the Appellant, and *Badger*, contra.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The Defendant is doubly estopped from showing title in *John D. Amis*, first by the deed of *Jesse Webb* to the lessor of the Plaintiff. The widow is estopped by her husband's deed, for she is tenant to the heir who is estopped, and the tenant is always bound by an estoppel on his landlord, when his title is derived after it arises. She is also estopped by matter in pais; her husband, after his conveyance to the lessor of the Plaintiff occupied the lands as tenant at will or sufferance under the lessor, he could not therefore, dispute his landlord's title. Upon his death, the widow succeeded to the possession, accompanied by the estoppel, as she could not succeed to her husband's possessions stripped of its incidents; one of which was that he could not dispute his lessor's title. The Defendant, upon his marriage with the widow, succeeded to her possession in the same manner in which she held. The Judge was therefore correct in disregarding the facts showing title in *John*

D. Amis; and although it is said that a Jury is not estopped but may find the truth, that is only in such cases where the party has waived the estoppel, as when having an opportunity to plead and rely on it, he omits to do so, but relies on the real fact, (*Trevivan* v. *Lawrence*, 1 *Salk.* 276.) In this case, from the nature of the action, he could not plead it, he shall therefore have the same advantage on the evidence, as if he had pleaded and relied on it. It is not intended to impugn the rule, that in an ejectment the lessor of the Plaintiff recovers by the strength of his own title, and not by the weakness of his adversary's. In this case, the evidence which shows his title to be weak, to-wit, that the title is in *John D. Amis*, is excluded by the estoppel, and if offered and found by the Jury, must be disregarded, for the estoppels (the admissions of the parties) appear also.

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Watts v. Greenlee.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

Mary Watts
v.
John M. Greenlee. } From Burke.

A count charging the Defendant with speaking slanderous words, is not supported by proof that he maliciously procured another to speak them.

CASE for slanderous words. The Plaintiff declared that she being a person of good fame and reputation and so esteemed by all persons, and never having been guilty of any of the infamous acts imputed to her by the Defendant, &c. nevertheless the Defendant being an evil minded person and intending to slander her in her good name, fame and character, on &c. at &c. "did falsely and maliciously publish of her the Plaintiff, the following scan-

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dalous words, to-wit "she the said *Mary* is big" (meaning big with child) to his negro *Ben*," "that all *Watts'* girls" (meaning the Plaintiff as one of said girls) "are with child to negro *Ben*," "she (meaning the Plaintiff) is incontinents," he knowing at the time, the said malicious and slanderous words to be untrue and false, &c. to the damage of her the said *Mary* $5000, and therefore, &c."

The issue joined on the plea of "not guilty," came on to be tried before STRANGE, Judge, when the speaking of the words by the Defendant was sworn to by several witnesses, and their credit being drawn in question, the Plaintiff further proved by other witnesses, that on several occasions, the Defendant asked of an old man named *Martin*, who lived with him, what was the story about *Watts'* daughters and negro *Ben*, and *Martin* in answer to the enquiry, stated that all *Watts'* daughters were big with child by negro *Ben*. The Judge instructed the Jury, that though they should disbelieve the witnesses who testified to the Defendant's having spoken the words, yet if they believed that he procured the words to be spoken by *Martin*, in reference to the Plaintiff, and in his presence, with a design to impress the bystanders with the opinion that she was guilty of the scandalous conduct implied by the words of *Martin*, the Defendant was as guilty as if he had himself uttered them. The Jury found for the Plaintiff, and a motion for a new trial and in arrest of judgment having been overruled, the Defendant appealed.

Nash & Badger, for the Appellant,

1. There must be a new trial for the variance between the words proved and those laid in the declaration. The averment of a direct affirmation is not supported by proof of an interrogatory sentence, (*Starkie on Slander*, 271—*Barnes* v. *Holloway*, 8 *Term R.* 150,) still less will such

averment be supported by proof of a discourse in which the actionable words were spoken by a third person in answer to a question by the Defendant, containing no actionable words. The general proposition is not denied that such a discourse accompanied with a design to defame in the enquirer, will support an action against him; but here the question was, how far the declaration before us was supported by this proof, and on this question, the Judge certainly erred; for it is never sufficient that the words proved, are equivalent in meaning to those laid—they must be the same words, (8 *Term. R.* 150.)

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II. The Judge should have arrested the judgment.

1. Because it does not appear upon the face of the declaration that the words were spoken in the presence or hearing of any other person than the speaker. This is a fatal defect, for no action can be sustained without an injury to the Plaintiff; but abusive words can only produce injury by being heard and understood. Hence every declaration for slander must show the presence of others, either by express averment or impliedly from the manner of speaking the words, as that they were openly and publicly spoken, and where the words spoken are in a foreign language, it must also be averred that they were understood by those who heard them, (*Starkie on Slander*, 265—*Price* v. *Jenkings*, *Cro. Eliz.* 805.)

2. The action is founded upon a statute, (*Rev. c.* 748) and the Plaintiff does not count upon it. A recital of the statute, a reference to it or a conclusion upon it, is absolutely necessary in every declaration founded thereon—whether the statute give a certain penalty or uncertain damages—whether given to a common informer or solely to the party grieved—whether the statute originate a right of action where none was before, or give a new and cumulative remedy, or make the old remedy more certain and effectual. (*Com. Dig. action on penal stat. F. G. H.*—

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Lee v. *Clark*, 2 *East*. 333—*Earl of Clanricarde* v. *Stokes* 7 *East* 516—*Scroter* v. *Harrington*, 1 *Hawks*, 192.)

HENDERSON, Judge.—In this case, it is clear that there is error both in the Judge's charge to the Jury and in rendering judgment on the record, properly so called.—We will examine the first point only, for should there be a defect in the pleadings, we very plainly perceive, that there is sufficient substance in the declaration to support an action, and the Judge below has it amply in his power to permit amendments to be made to meet the justice of the case, upon such terms as he may think proper, *Farrar* v. *Alston*, decided at the last term, (*ante* 69). We shall therefore confine ourselves to that part of the charge wherein the Judge says, that if the jury should not believe the witnesses who had deposed to the Defendant himself having used the slanderous words, yet if they believed that he procured the words to be uttered by *Martin*, in his presence, and with the design of having it believed by the byestanders, that the Plaintiff was guilty of the scandalous conduct, which the words of *Martin* implied, he was as guilty as if he had uttered them himself. I understand the charge as amounting to this, that such evidence would *support a count that the Defendant himself uttered the words*. There is no doubt that the Defendant is responsible for this slander thus uttered by *Martin*. But the charge in the declaration must correspond with the proof, and although a declaration may be framed upon the words spoken by *Martin*, at the instigation of *Greenlee*, yet such proof cannot be received in support of a count charging *Greenlee* with speaking them, without violating the rules requiring precision in pleading, (*Starkie E.* 266, 270—8 *Term* 150.)

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and new trial awarded.

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The Governor, for the use of the County Trustee
v.
John Matlock & others,
} From Rockingham.

Where the condition of a bond has appropriate words to secure the performance of a certain class of duties imposed by law on a public officer, general terms superadded thereto (though large enough to include all his official duties) shall not extend *the liability of the surety* to other duties for which by law a separate bond is directed, but omitted to be given.

The Defendant *Matlock*, on being appointed Sheriff of Rockingham, entered into a penal bond in the sum of 5000l. with the other Defendants as his sureties, payable to the Governor and his successors, the condition of which was, that he should well and truly *execute all process and precepts* to him directed, and pay and satisfy all sums of money by him received or levied by *virtue of any process* into the proper office by which the same by the tenor thereof ought to be paid, or to the person or persons to whom the same should be due, his, her or their executors, &c. and "*in all other things well and truly and faithfully execute* the said office of Sheriff during his continuance therein." No other bond was given by him, and the county contingent tax having been collected and unaccounted for, the present action was brought upon this bond to recover the amount of that tax.

A verdict having been taken below for the Plaintiff, subject to the opinion of the Court whether there was any breach of the condition before set forth, his honor Judge NORWOOD, who presided, directed the verdict to be set aside, and gave judgment for the Defendant; whereupon the Plaintiff appealed.

Nash, for the appellant, contended,

1. That the Sheriff was always bound, in this State, to collect the public taxes; that this was as much a part

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of his official duty as Sheriff as the execution of the precepts of a Court of law. The office of Sheriff was created by the act of 1738, c. 3, which abolished that of Provost Marshall, before that time existing. (*Swan's Revisal*, 47).

It was the duty of that officer (the Marshall) to collect and account for taxes, and the Sheriff succeeded to all his duties. This duty of the Sheriff is declared in many public and private laws. He was required to give a bond, and this bond secured the due collection of taxes (*Act of* 1738, c. 3. s. 4. *Act of* 1740, s. 12, *Swan's Revisal*, 86, 122).

To prove the legislative exposition of acts imposing this duty upon the Sheriff before the year 1777, he cited the act of 1741, c. 15, c. 23, s. 8 & 13; 1743, c. 2; 1745, c. 2, s. 4 & 10, c. 10, s. 15; 1749, c. 2; 1756, c. 1. (*Swan's Revisal*).

The bond given under the act of 1777, c. 118, s. 1, (*Revisal* 827) is very similar in its provisions to that required under the act of 1738 (*Swan's Revisal* 47)—under the last mentioned bond the sureties were uniformly held responsible for the taxes; and if the condition of that required under the act of 1777 is broad enough to cover the taxes, the sureties to that also ought to be held liable.

The several acts of Assembly requiring the Sheriff to give distinct bonds can make no difference; the distinct bonds are cumulative, giving several securities for the same purpose, but do not affect the one originally given.

2. The words of the bonds sued on in this case are sufficiently broad to cover the collection of the taxes. It has been shown that this was a part of his official duty, and if so, must be covered by the words "shall in all things well and truly execute the said office." If the collection of taxes is an official duty of the Sheriff, this result must follow, for human ingenuity cannot mention

in the human language every possible and supposable duty of a Sheriff. (*Crumpler* v. *the Governor*, *Henderson's opinion*, *ante p.* 52).

The case of *the Governor* v. *Barr* (*ante p.* 65) is distinguishable from this. There the sum sought to be recovered, had been remitted—there also several bonds had been given. In both of which particulars it differs from this.

Those cases usually cited against the Plaintiff in questions of this kind (*Liverpool Water-works*, in *Atkinson*, 6 *East* 507, *Wardens of St. Savior*, in *Bostock*, 2 *N. R.* 508) have no application. The question in those cases was, whether the general words of a condition cover a case not within its purview and object. Here the question is, whether there has been a breach of official duty —if there has, a breach of the condition follows of course.

Gaston, contra, stated the question to be the very same which had been decided in this Court at the last term, in the cases *Crumpler* v. *the Governor* and *the Governor* v. *Barr* upon which he relied as decisive of the present case.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The Sheriff was not originally a fiscal officer; but at a very early period of the Provincial Government it was made his duty to collect the taxes which were laid by the Legislature—and it is admitted, that the obligation to do so, was embraced by his official bond. I presume that the revolution, of itself, produced no change in this particular—it was only a change of sovereignty. But immediately after it, tax-gatherers, as they were called, were appointed to collect the taxes and pay them to the District Treasurer, upon which the collection of the taxes ceased to be within the duty or power of the Sheriff. Afterwards the Sheriff was di-

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rected to receive the taxes from the tax-gatherers and pay them to the Treasurer. Soon after which, it was made his duty to receive them directly from the people, and bond payable to the Governor was required for the performance of this duty. This bond is in addition to his ordinary, or, as it is commonly called, his official bond. The County Court was authorised and directed to lay a tax for the county contingent purposes, and to appoint collectors thereof, who were to give bond.— This duty could not then be performed by the Sheriff; of course it came neither within his official bond, nor that for the collection of the public taxes. By a subsequent statute, it was made the duty of the Sheriff to collect those county taxes, and he was required to give bond payable to the Chairman of the Court for the discharge of this duty. I think it very clear, that on this last mentioned bond, and this alone, his sureties are liable for his failure of duty in this particular, not on the bond to the Governor for the collection of the public tax, although it may contain words sufficiently broad to embrace this, or all his duties; for the Governor is not appointed by law to superintend the collection of these taxes, and the general words shall be controlled and restricted by the particular words, to duties of the like kind; for those particular words being properly inserted, they were not there by mistake. And this fact distinguishes this case from that of *Crumpler* v. *the Governor*, decided at the last term. It is not embraced by the Sheriff's *official* bond, payable also to the Governor, for the same reasons.

This opinion does not conflict with any thing which heretofore has fallen from the Court, or any member thereof. It is placed entirely on the ground that when it was made the duty of the Sheriff to collect the county contingent taxes, he was directed to give bond payable to the Chairman of the Court for the performance of that

duty, which withdraws the obligations imposed by that law, both from the bond given for the collection of the public taxes, and from that for the discharge of his ordinary official duties. Independent of the clear intent of the Legislature that it should be so, the most inexplicable difficulties would arise were it otherwise, between persons having claims of different natures against the Sheriff, and possibly they may occur in the present case, for this recovery, if made, may, with those hereafter had on this official bond, exhaust the penalty; what shall those persons do, who may have suffered by a breach of the *official* duties of the Sheriff? Shall this recovery forestall them, and shall they be sent after the County Trustee for satisfaction? For I presume it must be admitted, that they have the preferable right, and if so, may pursue the fund.—I think the plain and evident intent of the Legislature was, to confine each class of claimants to the bond given for their benefit. There should be judgment for the Defendant.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

Charles Banner
v.
John McMurray and others, } From Stokes.

A deputation of necessity expires with the office on which it depends. *Therefore*, where a Sheriff appointed a deputy, who gave bond for his faithful conduct "*during his continuance*" therein, and the Sheriff was re-appointed, and the deputy continued to act under him for several years, *it was held* that the words "during &c." should be restricted to the first year, for the deputation expired then; and whether even express words, could have extended the liability further? *Quere.*

The Plaintiff was appointed Sheriff of Stokes in June, 1813, and in January, 1814, appointed the Defendant

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McMurray, one of his deputies, who with the other Defendants as his sureties, executed a penal bond to the Plaintiff, "in which he was called *Charles Banner*, now Sheriff of Stokes," with a condition, which after reciting that the Plaintiff had appointed *McMurray* one of his deputies, provided, that if *McMurray* should ably and faithfully demean himself in his appointment of deputy Sheriff, perform all and every act and acts which he should be legally bound to perform "*during his continuance in said appointment*," then the obligation to be void, &c. In June, 1814, when the Plaintiff's office by its tenure expired, he was re-appointed, and so also in the years 1815 and 1816. *McMurray*, during all this time, continued to act as deputy, by color of his original deputation and duly qualified as such in June, 1814, for the ensuing year and so also in June, 1816.

In June, 1814, *McMurray* was in default as deputy to the amount of $191 69, for the official year ending at that time. At the end of the second year in June, 1815, he was in advance to his principal, on account of that year in the sum of $176 67, and in June, 1816, he was again in default for the year then expired, to the amount $1045 05. At June session, 1816, of the County Court, the Plaintiff was paying the county tax for the year 1814, and called on *McMurray* for money, who paid $315.

In 1819, the Plaintiff brought this action upon the bond of *McMurray* and the other Defendants, and assigned many breaches, of which the only ones that applied to the year ending June, 1814, were for not collecting and for not accounting for the county taxes for that year. On the trial, before his honor Judge NORWOOD, the foregoing facts were stated in a case reserved. Upon which he gave judgment for the whole amount for which the deputy had been in default, after deducting therefrom the two sums of $315 and $176 67 above stated, and the Defendants appealed.

Nash & Badger, for the Appellants,

The words "during his continuance in said appointment," are satisfied by a performance during the year in which the bond was given, and shall not extend the liability of the Defendants to subsequent years in which the deputation was renewed, (*Ld. Arlington* v. *Merricke*, 2 *Saund.* 412—*Liverpool Water-works Co.* v. *Atkinson*, 6 *East* 507.)

And it makes no difference whether the duration of the appointment appear on the face of the condition or not; the terms of the engagement shall in all cases, be qualified and restrained by the nature of the office in reference to which the parties contract and the largest general terms, shall not include re-appointments, (*Wardens of St. Saviours* v. *Bostick*, 2 *N. R.* 175—*Hassel* v. *Long*, 2 *M. & S.* 363.)

This principle as well as the general doctrine to which it belongs, is fully and clearly stated and illustrated in *Parker* v. *Parker*, (1 *Term R.* 287) *African Co.* v. *Mason*, (*cited* 1 *Strange* 227) *and Wright* v. *Russel*, (3 *Wils.* 530—2 *Bl. Rep.* 944, *S. C.*)

The utmost therefore, for which judgment should have been entered, is the difference between the deficits of June, 1814, and the sum which the deputy was in advance at June, 1815.

But we contend that judgment should have been for the Defendants; the $315 paid by *McMurray* in June, 1816, was applied to the discharge of the tax due in 1814, in respect to which he was in default, it was not then a general payment in account between the Sheriff and the deputy, but a payment appropriated to the extinguishment of the only claim for which the Defendants are liable on this bond.

For the Plaintiff, no counsel appeared, but one of the bar as *amicus curiæ*, referred to *Hughes* v. *Smith & Miller*, (5 *Johns. Rep.* 168.)

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Henderson, Judge.—

The deputation given to *McMurray* expired with the appointment of his principal, as the principal could not substitute another in an office which the principal did not then hold; the deputation I presume, would so have expired, even if it contained words importing a substitution in future years, when the Sheriff might be re-appointed, but certainly it is so when general words only are used, as in the present case.

The only evidence we have of the extent of the deputation is contained in the recitals of the bond and condition, the former describes *Bonner* as "*now Sheriff of Stokes*" and the latter recites that he "has appointed *McMurray* one of his deputies," it would therefore be inconsistent as well with authority as reason, to extend against sureties the obligations of this bond to the faithful discharge of any other duties, than those arising from the deputation which he then held. In support of this, I refer to 6 *East.* 507—2 *Saunders* 412, and the other authorities cited in the argument. We must confine ourselves therefore, to the breaches at June, 1814, when *Banner's* appointment expired. *McMurray* was then in default in the sum of $191 69, and this breach is within the obligations of the bond, for this sum then with interest, judgment would be rendered, were it not that in June, 1815, *McMurray* was in advance to the amount of $176 67, in other words, *Banner* owed him that sum.—However, *McMurray* and *Banner* might themselves have settled it, if no other persons were concerned, yet where sureties are concerned the fact of *Banner's* having so much money in his hands belonging to *McMurray* was *ipso facto*, a satisfaction even in a Court of Law, of the breach as far as it would go, and it was out of the power of *Banner* and *McMurray* by any agreement either express or implied, to appropriate it to other purposes, thereafter to happen. I say thereafter to happen, for

had there been at the time, any other debt due to *Banner* from *McMurray*, *McMurray* might upon paying it, have applied it to that debt, or in his default of making the application, that right devolved on *Banner*; or if *McMurray* had paid upon any special agreement, or for a particular purpose, it would not have operated as satisfaction for the default. But where money falls into the hands of the creditor rightfully, and by the debtor's consent for no definite and particular purpose, when sureties are concerned, and the creditor has but the one demand, it operates *ipso facto* a discharge of the obligation, for such application can then do neither the creditor nor the principal debtor any wrong, and in the absence of all evidence why it was placed there, the presumption is irresistible that it was placed there in satisfaction of the obligation; which presumption, the creditor and principal debtor may do away or destroy as between themselves by their after conduct; but the rights of others sureties, cannot be effected by their acts. As to the payment of the $315 at June Term, 1816, *McMurray* not having made the application when he paid it, and being then indebted to *Banner* in a larger amount, the right of application belongs to *Banner*.

The judgment therefore, should be for the difference between the sum of $191 69 and $167 67, with interest.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and judgment for the Plaintiff for the lesser sum.

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Edward S. Jones
v.
Luke Huggins.
} From Onslow.

A witness who has seen many certificates of survey attached to grants and purporting to have been made by a surveyor who had been many years dead, is competent, from the knowledge of his writing thus acquired, to prove that a particular plat of survey is in the hand-writing of the deceased surveyor.

A survey though ancient made by direction of the owner of lands, fo his own convenience, is not admissible evidence for him, or those claiming under him.

This was an action of trespass Q. C. F. tried before DANIEL, Judge, the Plaintiff deduced title under a grant for 640 acres of land to one *Joel Martin* in 1713, a conveyance to *John Starkey* in 1759, and subsequent descents and devises to himself. The Plaintiff also deduced title to himself under a grant to *John Starkey* in 1760, for eighty acres, to which grant was annexed a certificate of survey purporting to have been made the 24th of October 1759, by *John Skibbow*, deputy Surveyor of Onslow. A long continued and actual possession was then shewn of land alleged to be in both grants, of neither of which was a corner or line tree to be found; and in order to locate them, the Plaintiff gave evidence of the general reputation respecting their boundaries. As further evidence, it was proposed to submit to the Jury a map or plan, purporting to represent the two tracts of land, on which were laid down various water courses, dwelling houses and other objects, and at the foot of the map was a memorandum in these words: "This plan represents 660 acres of land in Onslow county, on the west side of White Oak River, beginning, &c. (setting forth various courses and distances) as by the patent granted, &c. doth appear. Explained for *John Starkey*, Esq. 24th October, 1759, *P. J. Skibbow*, D. S." The plaintiff proved by an aged resident of the county that *John Skibbow*,

was dead before his recollection, and that he had understood from general report, that *Skibbow* in his lifetime, acted as a surveyor or deputy surveyor of the county, that the witness had seen many plats of surveys attached to grants of land and purporting to be made by *Skibbow*, and from the acquaintance with his hand-writing thus acquired, believed that every word in the memorandum and in the map produced, was of the proper hand-writing of *Skibbow*. Whereupon, the Judge, notwithstanding an objection taken thereto by the Defendant's counsel, received the map in evidence and left its weight and effect to be judged of by the Jury.

A verdict was found for the Plaintiff and a new trial being refused, the Defendant appealed.

Badger, for the Appellant,

The proof by which the paper was shown to be in the hand-writing of the surveyor, was comparison of hands. This kind of proof is not admissible, the true rule is that laid down by *Yates* Justice, in the case of *Brockland* v. *Woodley*, (*Gilb. Ev.* 47 *n.*) "where a witness has seen the party write, and speaks to his belief of that hand-writing which is produced, being the party's hand-writing, that is evidence. But where it is merely opinion on similitude, collected from comparing them, the Jury may compare them as well as any one else."

The same rule is established by this Court in the *State* v. *Allen*, (1 *Hawks* 6) the established mode of proof are then said to be first, the evidence of one who has seen the party write; second, of one who has in a course of a correspondence, received pertinent letters from him; third, of one who has inspected old and authentic documents signed by him.

This case is not within any of these, the documents inspected by the witness do not appear to be such as the law recognizes as authentic, the determination of their

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character is not left with the witness, (1 *Starkie Ev.* 167, 169.) It does not appear that the witness ever saw the papers before the trial, nor what grants he saw, what were their number, or where they were kept. The paper offered in evidence was not shown to be ancient, there was no evidence of its existence, even a day previous to the trial, and therefore it should not have been proved as an ancient paper.

2d. But the survey if properly proved, was a private *exparte* survey, and is nothing more than the plan, statement or declaration of the person under whom the Plaintiff claims; it is not, on general principles, evidence against the Defendant, and the cases are express to this purpose, (*Peake's Ev.* 60—1 *Starkie Ev.* 26—*Bridgman* v. *Jennings*, 1 *Ld. Raym.* 734.)

Gaston, contra.—To prove handwriting, any witness may be called, who has by sufficient means acquired such a knowledge of the general character of the writing as will enable him to swear to the hand-writing in question, (2 *Starkie* 651.) Whether the mode by which the knowledge is acquired is sufficient, must depend upon the nature of the document to be proved, if it be a modern paper, the rule requires that the witness should have seen the person write, or have received letters from him in a course of correspondence. But if the document be an ancient one, these modes of acquiring aknowledge of it are unattainable, and others must be allowed, (2 *Starkie* 651, 656—1 *Phillips* 372—*Buller N.P.* 235, 236.)

As a general rule, that comparison which results from juxtaposition, is not allowed; the reason is not as usually said, because the jurors may not be able to read, and because an unfair selection of specimens may be made, but because if permitted, the evidence may be drawn out o an inconvenient length, and too many collateral enquiries arise, (*Starkie* 655-6.) But in proof of ancient

documents, a witness is allowed to speak from a knowledge acquired by an examination of old and authentic writing, (*Lessee of Thomas* v. *Horlocker*, 1 *Dall.* 14,) and if no other evidence can be had, there may be a comparison of hands as to ancient papers. (*Roe dem. Brune* v. *Rawlings*, 7 *East.* 282—*Morewood v. Wood*, 14 *do.* 327.)

No reasonable doubt can exist as to the proof of this survey, it is sixty-eight years old, is produced by him who should have the custody of it, and who holds it as a muniment of his title, and it accompanies an authentic paper, viz. the survey of a cotemporaneous grant. The witness who proves it, derived his knowledge from having seen similar papers annexed to many grants. By statute, a survey is required to accompany every grant, and grants are the most solemn assurances known to our law.

The authenticity of the paper being established, it was admissible in evidence as the declaration of a deceased witness, in relation to boundary made before any dispute had arisen. The survey annexed to the patent was dated October 24th, 1759, and the paper offered was executed the same day; if the surveyor was now alive, his testimony would be very high evidence as to the location of the grant, a witness who had heard him describe the location, would be allowed to give such description in evidence; can there be any reason why his verbal declaration should be received, and his written certificate of the same fact rejected?

It is said that this is the declaration of *Starkie*, and therefore not admissible for those claiming under him; but this is founded in a mistake, it is not the declaration of *Starkie*, but of the surveyor; it is not made *by Starkie* but *for* him.

Badger, in reply.—The antiquity of the map was not shown, either by inspection as in the case in *Dallas*, or

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by the place in which it was found as ecclesiastical terries kept in the Bishop's registry, rolls of Courts Baron, produced by the Steward, &c. There is nothing which imports antiquity but the date, and the paper may, for any thing that appears, exhibit on its face unequivocal indications of a recent origin. The evidence of the handwriting could have been properly received only on the ground that the paper was ancient, and yet its antiquity was presumed without proof, in order to let in the evidence. Surely the Plaintiff's case was not helped by his producing the paper, for that shows it to have been under his control, and is of itself a reason for suspicion.

The case in *Ld. Raymond* is a direct decision that a survey of a manor made under the direction of the Lord is not evidence of its boundary except against those who claim under him. As a survey therefore, the map was not admissible, nor was it admissible as the declaration of a deceased person. A declaration of *Skibbow*, whether verbal or written, made as the agent of *Starkey*, is but the declaration of *Starkey* himself, and can effect only those who claim through him.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—I consider that the evidence offered of *Skibbow's* hand-writing was legally admitted, and that it was certainly free from the objection of its being proof from comparison of hands. The witness was an aged man, and *Skibbow* had died before his remembrance, the witness's knowledge of the general character of *Skibbow's* hand-writing was derived from having inspected many plats of surveys annexed to grants, which surveys purported to have been made by him, who was reputed to be a surveyor or deputy. I think this satisfies the rule of law that the witness must have acquired his knowledge of the hand-writing by sufficient means; for the authenticity of these grants held by various persons as the muniments of their estates, cannot

reasonably be questioned. The offices where they issue, and where they are recorded, the small temptation presented to commit forgery and the facility of detecting it, place these documents on more elevated ground than bank bills or post office franks, and bring them within the operation of the rule stated by *Le Blanc J* in *Roe v. Rawlings*, (*7 East* 282.) This very point has been so decided in New-York, as appears from the case quoted at the bar.

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But on the question whether the survey itself be competent evidence for the Plaintiff, the Court is of opinion that it is inadmissible as being a private memorial procured to be made by *Starkey* for his own convenience, and is not evidence for him, or for any one who claims through him. The reason for excluding such evidence is decisive, viz. that it might benefit men to include in such surveys more than belonged to them. There must consequently be a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and new trial awarded.

Jesse Battle, adm'r.
v.
John Rorke.
} From Wake.

A Judgment *quando* is a Judgment in favor of the Defendant, who is therefore entitled to his costs.

Error from the Superior to the County Court, and upon the return the case was, that the Plaintiff in error had in the County Court plead *non assumpsit*, payment, a set-off and *plene administravit*, to an action brought by the Defendant in error. The Jury found a verdict for the Plaintiff below upon the three first pleas, and for the Defendant upon the last. Judgment *quando* was entered up for the damages and costs of the Plaintiff be-

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low, and "as to the costs of the Defendant in this behalf expended, it is considered that he be without day, &c."

The error assigned was, "that the judgment aforesaid, in form aforesaid, was given for the said *Jesse Battle*, against the said *John Rorke*, but by the judgment aforesaid, the said *Jesse Battle* does not recover his costs and charges, &c."

His honor Judge PAXTON, on the Spring Circuit of 1826, reversed the judgment and awarded restitution. Whereupon the Defendant in error appealed.

W. H. Haywood, for the Appellant.—The whole doctrine of *costs* at law, is to be derived from our act of 1777, by which it is enacted, that in "all actions whatsoever the party in whose favor *judgment* shall be given shall be entitled to full costs, &c." and so here, since the Plaintiff in error was not entitled to judgment, he cannot recover costs. (*Rev. Code*, 318, *c.* 115, *s.* 90).

The Defendant in error was entitled, upon the pleadings and verdict, to a judgment *quando*. If there were any doubt of this at common law, our act of 1794 expressly recognizes it, and the uniform practice of the Courts in this State supports such exposition of the law. (*Rev. Code*, 754).

It is no answer to say, that it is a hardship upon the administrator to compel him to pay the whole costs, when he has supported his plea of *plene administravit*; for it is equally a hard case upon the creditor who loses his *debt*, to require of him to pay also the costs of the administrator.

The cases to be found in the English books are not authorities here, because by the *Stat.* 23 *Hen.* 8, *c.* 15, the costs are regulated by the *verdict*, and not by the *judgment*. (2 *Bacon's Ab. Gwillim's ed. p.* 44).

F It is not contended by the Defendant in error, that he has a right to recover his costs of the Plaintiff in error, but that he must have judgment for them *quando*, as well as his debt; and that the administrator can have no costs *against* him, for he has and is entitled to *judgment*—the form of which it is submitted cannot be material under the act of 1777.

Devereux, contra.—According to the rules of pleading, a Defendant in whose favor the issue of *plene administravit* is found, is entitled to judgment, that the Plaintiff take nothing by his bill.

This is in strict accordance with the form of the plea, which begins with *Actio non*, and concludes with a prayer of judgment whether the Plaintiff ought to have and maintain, &c.

In England, judgments *quando* are only entered up when the Plaintiff, in his replication, admits the truth of the plea, and prays judgment *quando*; or where, on the trial, he fixes the Defendant with assets, although to a very small amount. In the last case, he obtains judgment and execution for the amount of assets and for his costs; with an entry of judgment *quando* as to the residue.

The rule was not thus settled without difficulty; some Judges contended in the first case, that the Plaintiff having confessed a matter which was a complete bar, he was out of Court; in the latter, it was insisted, that as he had negatived the plea, every plea being an unit, he was entitled to judgment and execution for his whole debt. (*Shipley's case*, 8 *Rep.* 134—*Dorchester* v. *Webb*, *Cro. Car.* 372—*Noel* v. *Nelson*, 1 *Vent.* 94. *Per Hobart arguendo in Brickhead* v. *Archbishop of York*. *Hob.* 197, 199. *Wentworth* 274 *to* 276).

It is clear, from the modern cases, that the Plaintiff, where he does not fix the Defendant with assets, the issue of *plene administravit* being found for the latter, is

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out of Court as to that action, and it is not clear but that he is forever barred. At all events the Defendant recovers his costs. (*Hogg* v. *Graham*, 4 *Taunt.* 135—*Ragg* v. *Wills*, 8 *do.* 129). The rule may be said to be universal, both in England and under our statute of 1777, that the party who prevails in the action recovers his costs. The difference contended for on the other side, between the *verdict* and the *judgment*, is not admitted, and will be found, on examination, to be untenable.

The practice in this State has differed from that adopted in England. Judgments *quando* are, and always have been entered upon verdicts establishing the amount of the demand, and the truth of the plea of *plene administravit*. This practice is conceived to have had its origin in a mistaken construction of the act of 1784, c. 226. This indulgence extended to Plaintiffs can be no reason for subjecting Defendants to costs, who have committed no wrong, and against whom the Plaintiffs have no right—right and wrong being the mothers of actions. (*Per Lord Hobart ubi supra.*)

If it be objected that the Defendant has caused costs to accrue, by pleading several pleas, the answer is, that by law he has this right. Besides, if there be any thing in it, it must equally extend to every case where double pleas are put in, as for instance, where in trespass *not guilty* and a special justification are plead, the last of which is found for the Defendant, yet nothing can be clearer than that he recovers his costs on such a verdict.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—This case depends upon the construction of the act of 1777, concerning costs, and the principles of pleading as applicable to the particular defence relied upon by the administrator. The act provides, that in all cases whatsoever, the party in whose favor judgment shall be given, shall be entitled to full costs, unless where it is or may be otherwise directed by

statute. Was judgment given in favor of the Defendant in the original action? No rule of pleading is better settled at common law, than if the Plaintiff joins issue upon the plea of *plene administravit*, and it be found against him, the judgment is that he take nothing by his bill. In such case, the Defendant goes without day, and the Plaintiff is concluded from all further proceeding against him. It is only where he confesses the plea to be true, that the Plaintiff is entitled to a judgment *quando*. (*Cro. Car.* 373. *Comyn's Pleader* 2 *D.* 9.) It has also been lately decided, in the case of *Hogg* v. *Graham*, cited from 4 *Taunton*, 134, that if upon the pleas of *non assumpsit* and *plene administravit*, the Plaintiff joined issue, and omitted to pray judgment of assets *quando*, the first issue being found for the Plaintiff, and the second for the Defendant, the Defendant is entitled to the postea and general costs.

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An exception to the rule of praying judgment *quando* is made by our act of 1794, in those cases where the administrator sells upon a credit, and the money has not been received at the time of trial. There it shall be liable to the satisfaction of judgments previously obtained, and entered up as judgments when assets should come to the hands of the executor or administrator. It is necessary however, in that case, to bring the administrator in again upon a *scire facias*.—As to the question of costs, it was decided in *Wellborn* v. *Gordon*, (1 *Mur.* 502) to which the practice has since conformed.——I think the judgment should be affirmed.

PER CURIAM. Judgment affirmed.

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Isaac Folsom
v.
William Gregory, } From Pasquotank.

A debtor convicted of fraudulent concealment of his effects, upon an issue between him and A, and ordered into custody thereupon, according to the act of 1822, ch. 1131, is not in execution at the suit of B, another creditor, in whose case no such concealment was found or suggested.

DEBT for an escape.—On the trial, before PAXTON Judge, the case was, that the Plaintiff and one *Cluff*, had obtained severally judgments against one *Wilde*, who was arrested by the Defendant as Sheriff of the county, on writs of *ca. sa.* issued thereon, and was duly discharged out of custody, upon giving the bonds required by the act of 1822 (*Taylor's Rev. c.* 1131) for his appearance at the next County Court, to take the benefit of the act, as an insolvent debtor. In the case of *Cluff*, it appeared from the record of the Court, that a suggestion was made by him that *Wilde* had fraudulently concealed his estate, and issue being thereon joined, the Jury found the suggestion to be true; whereupon, the Court adjudged that *Wilde* should be imprisoned in the public jail, &c until a full and fair disclosure of all his effects, &c. And under this judgment, the Sheriff had held him in custody, and afterwards permitted him to go at large.

In the case of the Plaintiff against *Wilde*, no entry appeared on the record, save this, "that the surety brought him into Court and surrendered him."

Upon this case, the question was, if *Wilde* was in the custody of the Sheriff upon the Plaintiff's judgment, or not; and the presiding Judge being of opinion that he was, the Plaintiff had a verdict and judgment, from which the Defendant appealed.

In this Court, the cause was submitted without argument, no Counsel offering on either side.

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TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It is essential to a recovery in this action against the Sheriff, that the party escaping shall be proved to have been arrested or charged in execution at the suit of the Plaintiff. In this case, the issue was made up and tried between *Cluff* and *Wilde*, and it was on account of the fraudulent attempt of *Wilde* to deceive his creditors, established on that issue, that the order was made for his commitment. The Sheriff was not bound to take notice of the claim of any other person; for it does not necessarily follow that *Wilde* would have been committed at the suit of *Folsom*, or that the same verdict would have been returned by the Jury. If a debtor be in custody of the Sheriff, at the suit of one person, or by process of law, and another has a *ca. sa.* against him, the Sheriff is not chargeable with an escape at the suit of the latter, unless the writ has been delivered to him. But if the second writ is delivered to him, the party is then in custody by force of that writ, in judgment of law, and the Plaintiff may declare accordingly. (*Frost's case*, 5 *Co.* 89).

The caution with with which the law abstains from charging a Sheriff with an escape, where he has not due notice of the party being in custody at the suit of the person suing for the escape, is strongly shewn in *Westby's case*, (3 *Coke* 71). There *Bustard* was severally in execution at the suit of *Dighton*, as well as at the suit of *Westby*, and the Sheriff, at the end of the year, delivered over *Bustard*, amongst others, to the new Sheriff by indenture, in which indenture the execution of *Dighton* was mentioned, but the execution at the suit of *Westby* was omitted. And afterwards *Bustard* always being in jail in the time of the new Sheriff, escaped. In a suit brought against the old Sheriff for the escape, it was ar-

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gued for him, that he was not liable, since he had delivered the body of *Bustard*, then being in jail, to the new Sheriff, consequently the escape began in his time; and as he had the party in his custody, he ought at his peril to take notice of all executions, *being matters of record*, and ought to keep him till all were satisfied.

But it was resolved by the Court, 1st, That when the body of *Bustard* was delivered to the new Sheriff, as in execution at the suit of *Dighton*, only, by that he was out of custody of the old Sheriff, and he cannot be within the custody of the new Sheriff, for *Westby's* execution, because he was not delivered to him, nor the Sheriff *charged with him for Westby's execution*, and although he was within the walls of the prison, yet it was an escape in law as to *Westby*; and that the escape began the moment the old Sheriff delivered the prisoners to the new Sheriff.

2. That the old Sheriff ought to give notice to the new Sheriff, of all the executions against any one who is in custody, although the executions are of record, yet the new Sheriff shall not take notice of them at his peril, but shall be charged only with such whereof the old Sheriff gave him notice.

This case appears to me to shew clearly, upon common law principles, that the Sheriff cannot be chargeable to this Plaintiff for the escape of *Wilde*, however the case may prove to be between *Cluff* and the Defendant.

But I think the same conclusion is deducible from the act of 1822, under which these proceedings have taken place. The Plaintiff's argument must be, that a commitment, on the finding of the issue between any one creditor who had arrested *Wilde*, must be a commitment as to all; and that the Sheriff should have taken notice of all those claims wherein *Wilde's* bail had surrendered him, and should have detained him till he was discharged as to all. To this the answer is, that the Court may

commit for either of three distinct causes; 1st, fraud or concealment; 2d, refusing to answer upon oath; 3d, not giving notice to the creditor. Now it may happen that the debtor is committed for not giving notice to the creditor between whom and himself the issue is made up. Shall the commitment be considered as on account of those creditors to whom he had given notice, which, no issue having been tried between him and them, he had no opportunity of shewing? I think this alone sufficient to decide the case.

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I am of opinion that the judgment be reversed, and a new trial granted.

HALL, Judge.—The Plaintiff's situation seems to differ widely from that of *Cluff*. *Cluff* contested the question of insolvency with their common debtor *Wilde*, and was successful; upon which, the Court ordered *Wilde* to be imprisoned until he should make a full disclosure of his property, &c. This disclosure was to be made for the benefit of *Cluff*. The Plaintiff was not party to the proceedings in that suit, and the order of imprisonment grew only out of the proceedings in that suit. There was no order for commitment in the Plaintiff's suit; and it does not appear that the Defendant held *Wilde* in custody therein.

Escapes draw after them heavy penalties, and ought not to be presumed or made out upon slight grounds.—The record of *Cluff* v. *Wilde* being received in evidence, it proved only that *Wilde* was imprisoned at the suit of *Cluff*, but not at the suit of the Plaintiff.

I think a new trial should be granted.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and new trial awarded.

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James Sheppard
v.
Samuel Simpson,
} From Pitt.

Contradictory descriptions in a deed, one of which is sufficient to designate the thing granted, shall not frustrate it. But if the descriptions can be reconciled, both shall stand.

Where lands was conveyed to one by his mother, and afterwards a moiety of it devised to him by his father, a Sheriff's deed conveying the *interest* of this person and describing it as "a part of three patents, situate, &c. being land devised to him by his father," passes only a moiety.

PETITION for partition, to which the Defendant plead that "he was not tenant in common with the demandant." On the trial of this issue the jury returned a special verdict, the material facts of which, were as follows: The land in question belonged to one *Jemima Smith*, who conveyed it in fee, to her son *Charles*. *David Smith*, the husband of *Jemima* and the father of *Charles*, by his will devised the same land to his wife for life, with a remainder in fee, to his sons *Charles* and *John*. Before the executions and the sale, hereafter mentioned, *John Smith*, the devisee of *David*, died intestate, and without issue, and *Charles Smith* succeeded, as one of his heirs, to one eleventh of his real estate. After the conveyance by the mother, and after the death of *John*, executions issued against *Charles*, under which the land in question was sold by the Sheriff, whose deed, after setting forth the executions, recited that he had levied them "on a tract of land, in the county of Pitt, situate on the south side of Tar river, and on both sides of *Hardie's* run, being the land devised to *Charles Smith*, by his father *David Smith*, and the undivided share of the said *Charles Smith* in the lands of his brother *John Smith*, containing together five hundred acres, more or less, being a part of three patents granted to *John Hardie*; and also upon the interest or share of the said *Charles*, in the crop growing

upon said land." In a subsequent part of the deed, the Sheriff "did grant, bargain and sell" to the purchaser, "the tract herein before mentioned, and the share of the crop thereon growing, with all the estate and profit of the said *Charles Smith* in and to the said land and crop." The Defendant claimed title under the purchaser at the Sheriff's sale. *Charles Smith* had conveyed any interest he had in the land to the demandant.

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Upon these facts, his honor Judge PAXTON, on the Spring circuit of 1826, thinking that the purchaser at Sheriff's sale, took only one-half and one-eleventh of one half of the land, decided that the parties were tenants in common, in the proportion of five-elevenths to the demandant and six-elevenths to the Defendant, and awarded a writ of partition; on the return of this writ at the next term, before his honor Judge MANGUM, a judgment of confirmation was entered, whereupon the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Appellant.

When the identity of the thing intended to be granted, is ascertained with sufficient certainty by the grant, and operative words are used sufficient to pass the thing thus ascertained, this intent shall not be disappointed by an error in a particular description. Of the application of this rule, many examples are given by *Lord Bacon* under the maxim "*veritas nominis tollit errorem demonstrationis*" (*Reg.* 25) and this rule is well stated, and its operation clearly illustrated in *Jackson* v. *Clark*, (7 *Johns. Rep.* 217) and *Worthington* v. *Hilyar*, (4 *Mass. R.* 205.)

This principle is decisive of the present case. The whole of the Sheriff's deed taken together, shows that he intended to levy on, and to sell a certain tract of land, particularly described and identified, as the property of *Charles Smith*, and there are apt words to convey the tract thus described. The Sheriff supposed indeed that

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Charles Smith's interest therein was only an undivided share, and that he derived that interest from a source expressed in the deed. Whereas in fact, *Ch. Smith* was entitled to the whole, and derived his title in another manner; yet this mistake shall not prevent the deed from passing the whole interest, it being the intent to convey the tract with such interest as *Charles Smith* had, and though the superadded expressions make the description false in particulars, yet sufficient appearing to designate the estate, it shall pass to effect the intent.

If this be true, in regard to private deeds, it should apply with greater force to the official deeds of the Sheriff. He makes no survey, has no knowledge of the lands, the quantity of the debtor's interest, nor the mode of its derivation, and consequently does not, and cannot sell by *metes* and *bounds*—all that he is required to do, or ordinarily does, is to designate the tract of land intended to be sold by its name, location or other general description. If a mistake in a particular description, resting solely in the knowledge of the debtor, shall be allowed to destroy or vitiate the operation of the deed, both the creditor and the purchaser will be exposed to frauds, which as they cannot detect, they cannot escape.

Gaston, contra.—The Sheriff levied on, sold and conveyed that *quantum* of interest which it was understood *Charles Smith* had in the land by devise, &c.

This construction would be given if this was a mere private deed. The cases cited on the other side prove only, that where the deed ascertains what is intended to be granted, and a false description is added, the deed shall not be rendered ineffectual, but shall operate according to the general intent—a proposition which is not disputed, but which does not affect the present enquiry. Here the question is not which shall be sacrificed, the general intent, or a particular description, but

what is the general intent? Not whether the subject matter being ascertained, shall the deed fail to operate because of a false recital in respect thereto, but what is the subject matter? Is it that which agrees with every description in the deed, or that which agrees with a part of the description only? The construction must be on the whole deed, and the general rule is, that where there is a recital, or any particular description manifesting the subject matter of the contract, general words which taken by themselves, would comprehend other subjects, shall be referred to such recital or description, and be restrained to the subject matter of the contract. Thus in the condition of a bond, (*Lord Arlington* v. *Merrick*, 2 *Saunders* 410—*Liverpool Water Works* v. *Atkinson*, 6 *East* 507—and *Crumpler* v. *the Governor*, decided in this Court at the last term, *ante* 52). So in a release, (*Cole* v. *Knight*, 3 *Mod.* 177—*Thorpe* v. *Thorpe*, 1 *Ld. Raym.* 235—*Butcher* v. *Butcher*, 1 *Bos. & Pul. new Rep.* 113). So in a covenant, (*Burrows* v. *Wright*, 2 *Bos. & Pul.* 13—*Earl of Clauricarde's case*, *Hob.* 273). And so also in a conveyance, (*Doddington's case*, 2 *Co.* 33, *Cro. Jac.* 22, 16 *Johns.* 116.)

The very purpose of a recital is to state facts and circumstances, and declare the object of the deed. The contract is the law imposed on the parties, and the recital is a key given by themselves to open their meaning, to resolve doubts, and to fix with authority, the interpretation to be given to the general expressions in which the operative provisions of the contract are declared.

But this is a Sheriff's deed, and therefore demands especially the construction for which we contend. It does not operate by force of ownership, and therefore the rule that deeds shall be taken most strongly against the grantor has no application, it operates by virtue of the execution, levy and sale—therefore nothing can pass except what was subject to the execution—was levied on under

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it, and was sold under the levy. The Sheriff recites a levy on a tract of land in the county of Pitt, situate, &c. "being the land devised to *Charles Smith*" &c. "and the undivided share" &c. and *conveys* "the tract before mentioned" "with all the interest of *Charles Smith*, &c." Here the word "being" is equivalent to "that is to say" and qualifies the expression "tract of land," to mean a certain interest or estate therein. It is not used to *identify* the tract as supposed on the other side, but to explain what the Sheriff meant by a tract of land, as the subject of the levy, and to confine its meaning to a particular *extent*.

It is assumed without evidence, that the Sheriff intended to levy on all the interest whatever it was of *Charles Smith*. Besides the question is what did he levy upon? He supposed *Charles Smith* to have a certain interest, and he levied on that interest, which he supposed he had, and it matters not that had he known there was a greater interest, he would have levied upon it.

This particular interest expressed in the deed was the subject of the levy and of the sale—that, and that only, the purchaser bought and paid for, and it seems difficult to assign a reason, why more should pass.

Public policy requires the construction for which we contend, and forbids a contrary one, as dangerous to the debtor and to the creditor, and introductive of fraud.

It is required of the Sheriff that he sell at public sale, (2 *Hayw.* 336) that he show the goods sold, (3 *Murph.* 470) and he is forbidden to sell several specific articles en masse. (2 *Hawks* 110).

With regard to lands, as he cannot actually seize or show them, and is obliged to sell, not on the land, but at the Court-House; it is at least to be demanded that he shall distinctly declare what he professes to sell, and that nothing else shall pass, (*vide* 1 *Johns. Cas.* 284—15 *Johns. Rep.* 537, 551, 101—14 *do.* 353.)

Hogg, in reply.—It is not denied that the recital shall qualify the rest of the deed, and that the construction is to be made on the whole deed; on the contrary, our argument is founded on the supposition that the recital is repeated *verbatim* in the operative part of the deed.

It is distinctly conceded that if the words "being &c." were intended to restrain the previous words "a tract of land" to a narrower sense than they import of themselves, then the former words only shall operate. But the question is, was that the intention? I hold it was not, but that the Sheriff intended to sell the "tract of land" with such interest as *Charles Smith* had. Now though when the intent is ascertained to be, to convey the land devised and the undivided share, &c. only, then the general expressions shall be rejected, or restrained so as not to enlarge that intent—yet these general *words* are important to enable us to ascertain whether that was the intent. The Sheriff recites that he has levied on "a tract of land," describing it, "being the land," &c. and then he conveys "the tract with all the interests of *Charles Smith*." If we make the construction upon the entire deed, and resort to no matter *dehors*—does he not convey the whole tract, if *Charles Smith* was entitled to the whole? And it is not the sense I give to the word "being" as intended to identify, fully justified. He sells the tract levied on, with *all the interest*. His authority was sufficient to sell all that *Smith* had—the words are sufficient to transfer it—*Smith* was entitled to the whole, and why should not the whole pass by the deed?

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The question in controversy is, what land was actually conveyed by the Sheriff's deed to *David Smith*, whether the whole tract as conveyed to *Charles* by his mother, or the land as devised to him by his father, and supposed to be acquired by the death of his brother *John Smith*. The granting part of

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the deed conveys the land "before-mentioned (in the recital) with the share of the crop thereon growing, with all the interest, estate and profit of the said *Charles Smith* in and to the *said land* aad crop." The recital of the deed is, that the Sheriff levied "on a tract of land in the county of Pitt, situate on the south side of Tar river, and on both sides of Hardie's run, being the land devised to *Charles Smith*, by his father *David Smith*, and the undivided share of the said *Charles Smith* in the lands of his deceased brother *John Smith*, containing together five hundred acres, more or less." There is a further recital that he also levied "upon the interest or share of the said *Charles* in the crop growing upon the said land.

It is evident then, that the Sheriff neither levied upon or sold the whole, as in fact owned by *Charles Smith*, because he expressly refers to his title as acquired from his father's will, and the death of his brother. And as to the moiety devised to *John Smith*, that cannot pass by the deed, because the Sheriff only conveys the individual share of *Charles* in that moiety. And to make this construction more obvious, the deed states that this individual share in *John's* moiety, *together* with *Charles's* moiety, contain together five hundred acres. If the whole tract had been conveyed, *Charles* would have been entitled to the whole of the crop, whereas only the share he was supposed to be entitled to in *John's* part is conveyed.

The principle is conceded, that if in the description of an estate in a deed, there are particulars sufficiently ascertained to designate the thing intended to be granted, the addition of circumstances false or mistaken, will not frustrate the deed. But I am unable to perceive any description or particular in this deed which ascertains that the whole tract of *Charles*, as derived from his mother's deed, was designated as levied upon or conveyed.

The first description "a tract of land in the county of Pitt, situate on the south side of Tar river, and on both

sides of Hardie's run," does not designate the whole tract as derived to *Charles* from his mother's deed, because it is equally a true description of the land upon the supposition that he derived title from his father's will, and the subsequent death of his brother *John*. But when the recital proceeds to state "being the land devised to *Charles* by his father *David*," it limits and restricts a description applicable to both titles, to that specific one which the Sheriff believed him to own. Then the granting part of the deed conveys the tract "herein before-mentioned, with all the interest, estate and profit of the said *Charles*," in and to the said land and crop.

Every part of the description is true in relation to the title supposed to be in *Charles* under his father's will; every part is false with respect to *Charles's* title to the whole tract from his mother's deed, provided the first general description is sustained by the recital, which the authorities cited clearly shew it ought to be.

The Sheriff's intent as to what land was meant to be sold, can be collected only from the deed. It is the land there described which was levied upon, bid for, and sold, and what I apprehend the Sheriff likewise intended to sell: though I have little doubt that if he had known the true state of the title, he would have sold the whole tract; but being misled by the will of the father, he sold only the land claimed under it. It is of great consequence to the public, that land sold at a Sheriff's sale, should be so specified and defined, that every person attending may know what price to bid, and to be under no doubt as to the land he is bidding for. If the whole of *Charles's* land passed under this deed, it would give an undue advantage to those bidders who were apprized of the true state of the title, and enable them to purchase the whole tract, while others were regulating their bids by the belief that nothing more than the land described by the Sheriff was set up for sale. In this case, the price

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was given for the land as described in the deed, and not for the land which it is almost certain the Sheriff did not know of, and which there is no reason to believe the purchasers did. It has been said with much force on a similar question, "It ought to be received as a sound and settled principle, that the Sheriff cannot sell any land on execution, but such as the creditor can enable him to describe with reasonable certainty; so that the people whom the law invites to such auctions, may be able to know where, and what is the property they are about to purchase." Sales by process of law, are under the protection of rules established for the common safety, and should be construed with a view to repress speculation and prevent the unnecessary sacrifice of property—consequences which would probably follow from a judgment in the Defendant's favor. I am therefore of opinion that the judgment of the Superior Court be affirmed.

HENDERSON, Judge.—If I understand the argument of the Defendant, it is that the reference made in the Sheriff's deed to the will of *David Smith*, describing the land sold, should be rejected, as repugnant to other descriptions which are sufficient to identify and locate it, which being more certain should control, and if necessary correct that contained in the reference. The description contained in the Sheriff's deed is "a tract of land lying in the county of Pitt, on the south side of Tar river, and on both sides of *Hardie's* run, being the lands devised to *Charles Smith* by his father *David Smith*, and the undivided share of the said *Charles Smith*, in the lands of his deceased brother *John Smith*, containing five hundred acres more or less, being a *part* of three patents granted to *John Hardie*." It is true, as contended by the counsel for the Defendant—that if there is a full and clear description contained in one part of a deed, and in another part, one less full and clear, which can-

not be reconciled with the first, the weaker shall give way, and if it cannot be disposed of otherwise, entirely rejected. Thus if A grant to B black acre, which he purchased of C, black acre will pass, although A purchased it of D, and not of C. If possible, the weaker description shall not be rejected: where they can be reconciled, it shall be done, and it is rejected only when that is impossible. But so far am I from thinking in this case, that either should be rejected as false or contradictory, I am of opinion that the description is incomplete without both—that the lands lie on the south side of Tar river, in Pitt county, on both sides of *Hardie's* run, is certainly not sufficiently descriptive, nor is their locality fixed by further adding, "being *part* of three patents granted to *John Hardie*." If the words had been "being the lands granted to *John Hardie*," it would have admitted of very great doubt, whether the reference to *David Smith's* will could have any effect; but the words are "*part* of three patents," what part? one-half, one-tenth, or one-twentieth. The reference to the will of *David Smith* is therefore necessary, to ascertain what part, and the Defendant himself is under the necessity not only of admitting it, but of insisting that it was made solely for the purpose of identifying the *lands* sold, and not the quantity of *estate*—for if the reference is used for the latter purpose, nothing passed, as *Charles* derived no estate in the lands from his father, he having none in them to give, they being the property of his mother.—Indeed if there is any doubt at all, it is whether *any thing*, rather than *what* passed; but I think there is none or very little, the reference to the will rendered that certain, which was before vague and undefined.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed, with the costs of this Court.

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James Moore
v.
Ira H. Coffield,
} From Martin.

An indorser discharged by the laches of the holder, being ignorant of such laches, promises to pay. The promise is not binding although it appear that on a sale of real estate by the indorser to the maker, the note and a deed of trust were taken to secure the purchase money, and the deed still held by the indorser at the time of the promise.

Where the maker is a seaman, without any domicil in the State, who goes on a voyage about the time the note falls due, no demand on him is necessary in order to charge the indorser.

ASSUMPSIT against the Defendant, as indorser of a single bill or obligation, of which one *Best* was the maker, and the Defendant the payee. On the trial, before his honor Judge MANGUM, at the Autumn term, 1826, of the Court below, the Plaintiff proved the execution of the note and the indorsement, and further proved that *Best* was a seafaring man, and at or about the time the obligation fell due, sailed from Washington, in this State, as captain of a vessel trading between that place and New-York. One or two days before the maturity of the bond, one *Hyman*, as agent of the Plaintiff, caused two letters to be written each addressed to *Best*, and demanding payment, and sent one of them by mail to Plymouth, and the other to Washington, and the day the bond became due, he gave to the Defendant a written notice, at the same time informing him that he had written the letters to *Best*. *Coffield* said he supposed he should have to pay this bond, but he should avoid the payment of another which he had indorsed to one *Watts*, who had failed to give him notice. *Coffield* also informed *Hyman* that he had a deed of trust from *Best* for a tract of land to secure the payment of the note, and requested him to take the land in discharge of the claim; and upon his refusing, desired him not to press the collection of the

money, and *Hyman* promised to indulge him as long as he could.

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By the deed of trust it appeared, that *Coffield* had sold to *Best* a tract of land, and for the purchase-money had taken the obligation on which this action was brought, and the one indorsed to *Watts*, and *Best* conveyed the same land in trust to secure the payment of these obligations.

Upon this evidence, the Plaintiff's counsel insisted, either that no demand was necessary, or there was such a promise to pay by the Defendant, as to avoid it.

The Judge instructed the Jury, *first*, that if *Coffield* had sold the land to *Best*, and in order to secure the payment of the purchase-money to himself, and without any view to an indorsement, took the obligation and deed of trust, he had not thereby waived his right to insist on a due demand of the obligee, and notice to himself.—*Secondly*. That though the Jury should believe *Coffield* did promise to pay, yet if at the time he was ignorant that payment had not been demanded of *Best*, the promise did not dispense with the demand, nor bind *Coffield*: and *thirdly*, that though the payment of the obligation to *Coffield* was secured by the deed of trust, and the payment being thus secured to him, he afterwards promise to pay the same to the Plaintiff, he was not bound thereby, the deed of trust not being a sufficient consideration to support the promise.

Under these instructions, a verdict was found for the Defendant, and a new trial being refused, the Plaintiff appealed.

The case was argued by *Hogg* for the Appellant, and the *Attorney-General* contra.

HALL, Judge.—The Judge was right in the three propositions laid down by him in his charge; but another point properly arose upon the facts stated in the case,

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which was not duly noticed. It was proved that *Best*, the maker of the obligation, was a seafaring man, and at or about the time the obligation became payable, sailed from Washington, as master of a vessel bound to New-York; and it did not appear that he had a domicil, or any establishment within the State, at which payment could be demanded. The maker being at sea, in his usual employment, and the indorsee not being bound to follow him beyond the State, it follows, that if he had no such domicil or establishment, a demand should be dispensed with.

In this view of the case, the Defendant was liable upon his indorsement, without any express promise to pay, and the Jury should have been so instructed—and consequently, for the Judge's omission to give such instruction, there must be a new trial.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed, and new trial awarded.

Charles McDowell & another adm'rs. of C. McDowell
v.
David Tate.
} From Burke.

The word "set off" entered by a Defendant with the general issue, shall be taken as a plea in bar where the amount is equal to, or greater than the Plaintiff's demand—where less, it shall be taken as a notice of set-off only.

An account signed by one with another, whose bond the first holds for a larger amount, should be left to the jury as evidence of a payment on the bond.

Debt for $472, due November, 1799, and secured by bond. The memorandum of the Defendant's pleas was entered in these words, "general issue, payment and set off," no formal pleas being filed; and the Plaintiff's

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counsel when the cause was called for trial, asked leave to amend the pleadings by replying the statute of limitations, to the last plea; but before RUFFIN, Judge, who presided, declared that he considered the entry to be equivalent, in the loose practice permitted in this state, not to a plea, but to a notice of set-off and the matter proposed to be replied could be used on the pleadings as they were, and therefore refused the amendment as unnecessary.

On the trial, the Defendant, after proving some partial payments, claimed the benefit of a further payment of $90, of which the evidence alleged was a written receipt signed by the Plaintiffs' intestate in his life, and the Defendant being unable to produce the receipt itself, proposed to prove its loss by his own oath, in order to let in evidence of its contents, which proof the judge refused to hear.

By way of set-off the Defendant then offered in evidence an account for £78, acknowledged and signed by the Plaintiffs' intestate the 20th November, 1802. More than three years having elapsed from that time till the bringing of this action, the Judge treating the word "set-off" as an informal notice only, instructed the Jury that the account was barred.

A verdict was found for the Plaintiffs, and a motion for a new trial being overruled, the Defendant appealed to this Court, where the cause was submitted without argument, no counsel appearing on either side.

HENDERSON, Judge.—A set-off to the full amount of the Plaintiffs' demand, may be pleaded in bar of the action. If it is less than the demand, it cannot of itself be pleaded in bar; but the Defendant avails himself of it by annexing it to some plea, which with the sum set off, amounts to a full defence, and giving notice of the set-off, most commonly thus, in the short entries on our dockets, *General issue and notice of set-off.* and if the

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McDowell vs. Tate.

particulars of the set-off are required, they must be furnished. And so it is, I apprehend, when it is pleaded in bar. The particulars must be furnished if required; and should the set-off, when offered in the form of a plea, be found not to amount to the Plaintiff's demand, the Defendant may use it as a notice of set-off. At least this is a common practice, and I can see no objection to it. The entry in this case is, *Gen. issue—set-off*. This I should have understood as offered in the form of a plea, and had it amounted to the full demand, it could not be objected that it was barred by the statute of limitations; for that which confesses and avoids, cannot be shewn under a general replication, which is nothing but a bare denial. But if the Defendant insists on this being a plea, it is clearly insufficient, for it is not an answer to whole demand. It can be used only as a notice of a set-off, and if good, is applied to extinguish the Plaintiff's demand to an equal amount. It necessary follows, that it may be repelled by shewing that is barred by the statute of limitations, without any replication to that effect. For in fact, when it comes in as a notice, no answer of record is given to it—that is, it is not noticed in the pleadings farther than before stated. But I think the Judge erred in not submitting it to the Jury as a payment. A payment differs from it only in this—that a payment is, by consent of the parties, either expressed or implied, appropriated to the discharge of a debt; a set-off is a mutual independent claim, which still continues to exist as such, and one which the parties did not intend should be appropriated to the satisfaction of an existing demand, but that each should have mutual causes of action, and of course mutual actions if they pleased against each other. In this cause, *Tate* was indebted to *M'Dowell* to the amount of several hundred dollars, and *Tate* furnishes *Greenlee* with articles to the amount of 70*l*. and *Greenlee* signs an account acknowledging their re-

ceipt. It is unfair to presume that *Tate* intended any thing else but to pay his debt as far as the amount would go, and that *McDowell* received them with the same intention. It is not probable that *McDowell* intended to come under an obligation to pay *Tate* that sum, whilst *Tate* owed him a large debt, or that *Tate* intended to inforce payment from him, and whatever might be *Tate's* original intention, if *McDowell* received them to be applied as a payment or credit to the bond, and this was known to *Tate* and assented to by him, it becomes a payment, that is, it is appropriated. And the conduct of *Tate* is a strong exposition of his understanding of it; for he has kept it for upwards of twenty years, without attempting to inforce payment; and although the statute in relation to set-offs has not changed the nature of mutual debts, and converted that to a payment, which in its nature is not—yet, in the interpretation of the acts of the parties, to get at the intention which gives character to the act, it has had a great effect, as in the present case. It is not presumed that *Tate* intended this as a set-off, or an independent demand; for if he attempted to inforce it, *McDowell* would set off his large demand against it, and make him pay costs—and if he did not, but waited to set it off until *McDowell* should bring suit, *McDowell* could entirely defeat it, by virtue of the statute of limitations.

I do not pretend that the statute has changed the nature of the thing—but only that when its character depends on intent, it has waived the presumption of that intent, and thereby given to it a different character.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and a new trial granted.

JUNE, 1827.

The State
v.
Henry A. Langford, } From Lincoln.

Burglary can only be committed in a dwelling-house, or such out-buildings as are necessary to it *as a dwelling*.

Therefore it is not burglary to break the door of a store, situate within three feet of the dwelling, and inclosed in the same yard.

The prisoner was indicted for a burglary, and on the trial before his honor Judge STRANGE, the breaking proved, was of the door of a store opening into the street, the store was within three feet of the dwelling-house of the owner, and was inclosed by the same fence—but there was no entrance common to both. His honor instructed the jury, that if they believed the breaking as proved, it was a burglarious one, and the prisoner was guilty.

A verdict being rendered for the State, and judgment of death awarded, the Defendant appealed.

No counsel appeared for the prisoner in this Court. The Attorney-General submitted the case on the part of the State, only referring to 2 *Russell*, 915—*Cassell's case* (1 *Hale*, 558—1 *Hawkins*, *ch.* 38, *sec.* 21 *&* 25) *Gibson's case*, (1 *Leach* 396).

HENDERSON, Judge.—Burglary is a breaking and entering the *mansion* house of another in the night time, with an intent to commit some felony within the same, whether such intent be executed or not. It is almost the only case where crime in the highest degree is not dependent on the consummation of the intent, in almost all other offences there is a *locus pœnitentiæ*. But the law throws her mantle around the dwelling of man, because it is the place of his *repose*, and protects not only the house in which he sleeps, but also all others appurtenant thereto, as parcel or parts thereof, from meditated harm; thus the kitchen, the landry, the meat or smoke-house,

and the dairy are within its protection; for they are all used as parts of one whole, each contributing in its way, to the comfort and convenience of the place as a mansion or dwelling. They are used with that view, and that alone; and it may be admitted that all houses contiguous to the dwelling, are *prima facie* of that description. But when it is proved that they are used for other purposes, for labour, as a workshop, for vending goods, as a store-house, this destroys the presumption. It then appears that they are there for purposes unconnected with the actual dwelling-house, and do not render it more comfortable or convenient as a dwelling—in short, that they are not a parcel or part thereof, but are used for other and distinct purposes—the house, as a dwelling, is equally comfortable and convenient without them, as with them. Their contiguity to the dwelling may afford convenience or comfort to the occupant, as a mechanic, a labourer or a shopkeeper, but none to him as an house-keeper. These principles, I think, are fully recognized in the case of the *King* v. *Egginton* (2 *Bos. & Pul.* 508) and spoken of in *East*, *Starkie* and *Russel*, with approbation. In fact, without some such rule, we should be at sea without a rudder—for shall we take distance as our guide? Must the off-house be within one foot, ten, or a hundred feet? Or, as some say, a bow's shot? Those who speak of distance ascertain it only by its being reasonable; and what may be reasonable to the mind of one man, may not be to that of another. Shall we take the curtilage as a guide? It may be asked to what extent? A small yard or a large one, inclosed or uninclosed?—for writers do not precisely agree as to what constitutes the curtilage. I think therefore, that it is unsafe to extend the signification of the word *dwelling-house* farther than to embrace the dwelling itself, and such houses as are used as part or parcel thereof—such as are used with the dwelling, considered as a dwelling-

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house, and tending to render it convenient and comfortable to the dweller as an house-keeper. If it be asked on the other side, what is to be done where the kitchen or pantry is placed at a great distance from the dwelling, whether it is to be protected as part thereof? It is answered that it must then lose its protection—not because it is no longer part of the dwelling, but on the score of carelessness or indifference; as the dwelling-house of a man is not protected who leaves his doors and windows open—or who places his property in a situation where he knows it will be stolen. For the criminal law protects men against those acts only, from which they cannot protect themselves, and leaves the careless and negligent to their civil remedy.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, *dissentiente*.—The definition of Burglary, as furnished by the best writers on criminal law, and explained by adjudged cases, does, in my opinion, include the case under consideration. The mansion, according to *Hale*, not only includes the dwelling-house, but also all the outhouses—such as barns, stables, cow-houses, dairy-houses, and the like, if they be part of the messuage, though they be not under the same roof, or joining contiguous to it. An outhouse upon a lot in a town, cannot be more completely placed within the protection afforded by law to the mansion-house, than this store was. It was three or four feet only from the dwelling-house, and connected with it by a gate, and it was under the same fence on all sides, where a fence could be made, so as to be within the curtilage, or piece of ground lying near, and belonging to the dwelling-house. In these circumstances, it is stronger than *Castle's case* (1 *Hale* 558) where two men were condemned for breaking open a back-house of *Castle's*, eight or nine yards distant from the dwelling-house, only a pale reaching between them. It is as strong as the case of *Gibson* and

others reported in *Leach*. There the shop was built close and adjoining to the dwelling-house, but there was no internal communication between the house and the shop, and no person slept in the shop. The only door to the shop was in the court-yard before the house and shop, which court-yard was inclosed by a wall three feet high. In the wall was a wicket which served as a communication to both the house and the shop. The burglary was committed in the shop, and the conviction was held to be proper. That case must have proceeded on the principle that the proximity of the shop to the mansion, placed it under the same privilege and protection. It was burglary, because the shop was within the curtilage, and not because the house and the shop were both inclosed by the same fence, for that is not essential to the formation of the curtilage, as appears from *Brown's case*, cited in *East's P. C.* 498. Nor can it be collected from *Castle's case*, already cited, that there was any common inclosure.

These cases seem to me to show the conviction here to have been proper; and I think their authority is strengthened by the cases relied upon in behalf of the prisoner, which being founded, in my view of them, on exceptions to the rule, prove the existence of the rule itself.

The first is *Garland's case* (*Leach* 130) where the breaking was of an outhouse, and occupied by the owner with his dwelling-house, and separated therefrom by an open passage of eight feet wide, but the outhouse was not connected with the dwelling-house by any fence inclosing both. The prisoner was acquitted, because the outhouse was so separated from the dwelling-house, and not within the same common fence. But in the case before us both circumstances exist, from the absence of one of which, the prisoner was acquitted in *Garland's case*. For here the store was connected with the dwelling-house, and both were inclosed within the same fence; for I consider a fence on three sides, where the front is

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on a street in a town, as equal to a fence all round in any other situation. But in *Garland's case*, the prisoner must have been convicted without the fence, if the out-house had been connected with the dwelling-house by a pale, instead of being separated from it, by an open passage, otherwise the principles of *Castle's case* would have been disregarded.

Parker's case, cited from 4 *John.* 423, is the same as *Garland's case*, save only in the distance of the store from the dwelling-house. It was not connected with the house, nor was there any inclosure.

Egginton's case (2 *Bos. & Pul.* 508), was decided on grounds which have no application to the circumstances of this case. From the facts stated in that case,—from the points relied upon by the prisoner's Counsel in arguing it, and from the manner in which it is constantly quoted by writers, I infer that the judgment proceeded on the ground that the centre building was severed from the mansion-house by lease or otherwise, and adapted to the use of several manufactories, the partners of which had it on their joint occupation; consequently, it could not be considered as the mansion-house of *M. R. Boulton*. So if a man let a shop only, and sever it from his house for years, and the party who hath the shop does not lodge in it, and this be broke open in the night-time, it is no burglary. *Kelyng* 84. If *Boulton* had used the centre building in a manufactory of his own exclusively, it must have been considered as part of his dwelling-house, although there was no internal communication between them.

The books may be searched in vain for any rule or case, referring to the use made of an outhouse as the criterion whether burglary can be committed by breaking it open. A shop or manufactory may, in judgment of law, be part of the mansion-house, as much as a dairy or stable, or any other house subsidiary to the comfort and

enjoyment of the mansion, as some of the cases already remarked upon, show. And *Mr. Justice Blackstone* says, if the barn, stable or *warehouse*, be parcel of the mansion, and within the same common fence, a burglary may be committed therein, for the capital house protects and privileges all its branches and appurtenants, if within the curtilage or homestall. (4 *Bl. Com.* 225). *Lord Coke* divides a mansion-house into two branches, viz. to inset edifices, as hall, parlour, buttery, kitchen and lodging chambers, and the outset buildings, as barns, stables, cow-houses, dairies, &c. All these are parcels of the mansion-house, and will pass by that name. Without ascribing to his lordship's *et cetera*, the same extent which he gives to some of *Littleton's*, we may fairly understand it as including all the houses within the homestall, whatever may be their use. It would be strange too in practice, to protect a more remote dairy, and leave unprotected a contiguous store, presenting much stronger temptations.

This is my view of the case maturely considered, though expressed with all possible brevity; but as it may be erroneous, I am highly gratified that the opinion of my brothers renders it harmless to the prisoner.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and rule for a new trial made absolute.

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The State
v.
Samuel Roberts, } From Buncombe.

Where a prisoner has once been induced to confess by the impression of hope or fear, confessions subsequently made are presumed to proceed from the same influence, until the contrary be shewn by clear proof. And while this presumption remains unanswered, these latter confessions (though induced by no *immediate* threat or promise) are not admissible evidence.

The prisoner was indicted of a burglary, and on the trial before STRANGE Judge, *Mr. Solicitor Wilson* offered in evidence confessions made by the prisoner, under the following circumstances. After he was arrested, some person (one *Smith*, the prosecutor, being present) said, "that as the prisoner was now in custody, any confession he might make, could not be given in evidence against him, he might therefore as well come out with the whole truth;" and some other person added, "that as he was a young man, if he made confessions it would be more to his credit hereafter." Upon this, the prisoner made the confession which was offered to be given in evidence, but the Court rejected it.

It was then proved, that several days after the prisoner was committed to jail, he of his own voluntary motion, requested the Jailer to send for *Smith*, stating that he wished to disclose to him the names of certain persons who had been concerned in, and advised the commission of the burglary. *Smith* came, and after the prisoner had stated his accomplices' names, *Smith* asked him how he got the door open, in answer to which he described the manner of opening the door, and stated other circumstances tending to establish his guilt, many of which were confirmed by the testimony of other witnesses.

These latter confessions the Court received and left to the Jury, who found the prisoner guilty: and a new

trial being refused and judgment pronounced, the prisoner appealed. June, 1827.

The State v. Roberts.

No Counsel appeared for the prisoner in this Court.

The *Attorney-General* cited *Rozier's case* (2 *Starkie's Ev.* 50 *n.*) *Rowe's case* (*Appendix to Burn's Justice, tit. Evidence*) *Commonwealth* v. *Dillon* (4 *Dal.* 116) and *State* v. *Moore* (1 *Hay.* 482).

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—I think it would be unsafe to extend the admission of confessions in evidence against a prisoner, further than a course of approved adjudications warrant. The true rule is, that a confession cannot be received in evidence, where the Defendant has been influenced by any threat or promise; for, as it has been justly remarked, the mind, under the pressure of calamity, is prone to acknowledge, indiscriminately, a falsehood or a truth, as different agitations may prevail; and therefore a confession obtained by the slightest emotions of hope or fear, ought to be rejected. Here, the prisoner was told his confession could not be given in evidence on account of his being in custody, and that he had better tell the whole truth; and further, that as he was a young man, it would be to his credit hereafter. Some confession was made under the immediate influence of the motives thus presented to him. Two or three days afterwards, without any immediate influence being exercised over him, he made a fuller confession; but it is impossible to say that the latter was voluntary, for it may have been the result of the hope first held out to him—and before it is admitted, the Court ought to be thoroughly satisfied that it was voluntary.

There ought to be a new trial.

HALL, Judge.—In order to make the confessions of a prisoner evidence to a Jury, it should appear that he was

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not induced to make them from a hope of favor, or compelled by fear of injury

As to the first confessions made by the prisoner in this case, two circumstances are observable: First, he was told, that any confessions he might make, could not be given in evidence against him, because he was in custody; and secondly, that if he made any it would be more to his credit hereafter. I think the Judge acted altogether right in rejecting, as evidence, these confessions, because they were made with the expectation of benefit, and under a belief that they could not afterwards be raised up in evidence against him. When these confessions were made, *Smith* the prosecutor was present, and the confessions which were afterwards made to him in jail, appear to have been a continuance of those which were made as before observed upon. The prisoner, it is presumable, did not think that these would be used against him, more than those first made. Indeed it would seem a little strange, that confessions made at one time should not be evidence, but a repetition of them afterwards should be; besides, it may be asked, why did the prisoner, by his last confessions, try to make others participate in his crime, unless it was therefrom to derive benefit, and lighten his own burthen? I think these confessions were not of that voluntary character which the law requires they should be, to make them legal evidence. The first and last made confessions appear to me to be of the same character.——I am of opinion a new trial should be granted.

Henderson, Judge.—Confessions are either voluntary or involuntary. They are called voluntary, when made neither under the influence of hope or fear, but are attributable to that love of truth which predominates in the breast of every man, not operated upon by other motives more powerful with *him*, and which, it is said, in

the perfectly good man, cannot be countervailed. These confessions are the highest evidences of truth, even in cases affecting life. But it is said, and said with truth, that confessions induced by hope, or extorted by fear, are, of all kinds of evidence, the least to be relied on, and are therefore entirely to be rejected. It seems to be admitted in this case, that the confessions first made, were of that character, and were therefore rejected; but that being repeated to the same person some time afterwards, they lost their original character, assuming that of free and voluntary ones, and became evidence of the truth. But for what reason I am at a loss to conceive. How or whence does it appear, that the motives which induced the first confession had ceased to operate when it was repeated? It is not incumbent on the prisoner to shew that they resulted from the same motives. It is presumed that they did, and evidence of the most irrefragable kind should be produced to shew that they did not. It is sufficient that they may proceed from the same cause (4 *Starkie* 49). In fact, the latter confessions are mere duplicates of the first, and it might as well be said, that the copy is more perfect than the original. Had the prisoner gone further in the last confessions than in the first, such further admissions are all of the same character, and are supposed to flow from the same source. As to the confessions being corroborated by other testimony, that cannot affect the case. They were admissible, or inadmissible, of themselves. It is true, that where a fact has been ascertained through extorted confessions, such fact may be proven. As if the prisoner disclose the place where the stolen goods are concealed, it may be shewn that the goods were found there; but nothing that the prisoner said in regard to them is admissible. Were it not for authority, which I am not prepared either to admit or deny, I would say, that nothing but the insulated fact pointed out by the prisoner's confession should be

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proven, not even that the discovery was made by means of the confessions. (4 *Starkie's Ev.* 51). These corroborating circumstances, I think were improperly received, and this upon authority, as well as reason; for the confessions cannot be propped by circumstances tending to establish their probability. The evidence shewing that, must rest on its own basis, and cannot be propped by confessions improperly obtained.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and new trial awarded.

The State
v.
Robert H. Molier, } From Buncombe.

Although the testimony of two witnesses is necessary to convict of perjury, yet the direct oath of one witness, and proof of declarations of the prisoner inconsistent with the oath in which perjury is assigned, is sufficient.

Perjury is properly assigned in an oath taken before a Court of competent jurisdiction, although the witness was erroneously sworn.

False spelling which does not alter the meaning of the word misspelt, is no ground for arresting the judgment.

The Defendant was indicted for perjury alleged to have been committed on a trial before a Justice of the Peace, in which the prisoner was the Plaintiff, and one *McGehee* the Defendant, for "a debt of one dollar due by account." Upon the trial, the prisoner was sworn as a witness for himself, and proved an account for one *sifter* or *sieve*, swearing that it "was just and true." The prisoner was then asked by the Justice, whether he had not given the sifter to *McGehee*, to which he replied that he had not given it, but that *McGehee* then owed him for it. The prisoner was not asked whether the matter in dispute was a book account, nor whether he could prove the delivery of the sifter by other means than his own book and oath. Neither was the book debt oath exhibi-

ted to him, but he was admitted to prove the sale and de- JUNE, 1827.
livery, without any objections by *McGehee*, or the Jus- The State
tice. On the trial of the indictment, before his honor v.
Judge RUFFIN, the falsity of the oath was proved by Molier.
McGehee, who swore that the prisoner had given him the sifter, and by four other witnesses, two of whom swore that a short time before the delivery of it, they had heard the prisoner say that he intended to give it to *McGehee*, and the other two swore, that a short time thereafter, they had heard him say that he had so given it.

The Counsel for the prisoner contended, that he could not be convicted; first, because the falsity of the oath was proved by one witness only; the other witnesses proving declarations of the prisoner, which although inconsistent with his oath, might be false. Second, that if the oath was false, it was not perjury, as it was taken extrajudicially—a Justice of the Peace not having jurisdiction to swear a party to prove his own account, unless he made the declaration prescribed by the act "ascertaining the method of proving book debts." Both of these objections were overruled by the presiding Judge, who instructed the jury, that if they were satisfied by the oaths of two witnesses, that the prisoner had deliberately, knowingly and corruptly, taken a false oath, they ought to find him guilty. And that the rule of law requiring two witnesses to convict, was well satisfied by the proof of the declarations made by the prisoner, provided they believed the witnesses who swore to them.

The Jury found the prisoner guilty, and his Counsel moved, first for a new trial, on the ground of misdirection, and second in arrest of judgment, because the word *sieve*, was spelt *sive*. Both of which being overruled, and judgment pronounced for the State, the prisoner appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by *Gaston* for the Appellant, and by the *Attorney-General* for the State.

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TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It is a well-established rule of evidence, that the testimony of a single witness is insufficient to warrant a conviction on a charge for perjury. But it does not appear to be any where laid down that two witnesses are necessary to disprove directly the fact sworn to by the Defendant, although in addition to the testimony of a single witness, some other independent evidence ought to be adduced. To convict a man of perjury, there must be strong and clear evidence, and more numerous than the evidence given for the Defendant, is a rational rule laid down in 10 *Mod.* which seems to have been followed ever since; for if you weigh the oath of one man against another, the presumption always made in favor of innocence, shall turn the scale in favor of the accused. Here the falsity of the oath was directly proved by one witness, who swore that the prisoner gave him the sifter; and the evidence given by the other four witnesses, appears to me to be of that independent and supplemental character which will satisfy the rule of law. To two of these witnesses the Defendant told, that he intended to give the sifter to *McGehee*, and to the two others he said, a short time afterwards, that he had given it. This is undoubtedly strong evidence of the falsity of the oath, and when added to *McGehee's* evidence, removes the dilemma of weighing his oath against the prisoner's, by creating a decided preponderance against it. It is such evidence as was properly admissible on the trial of the warrant, according to the case of *Kitchen* v. *Tyson* (3 *Mur.* 314); and if admitted, must have destroyed the credibility of the prisoner. I cannot perceive why it is not equally strong, upon the trial of the indictment, in addition to *McGehee's* evidence, to show the falsity of the oath.

As to the other reason for a new trial, it presents the enquiry, Whether the oath was judicially administered? That the Magistrate had jurisdiction of the matter, be-

ing a book account, is not to be doubted; and any irregularity in the mode of administering the oath, cannot oust that jurisdiction. The record sent up authorises the belief, that the Defendant *McGehee* was present at the trial of the warrant, and as *he* did not require the preliminary questions to be asked of the prisoner, it must be considered as a waiver of them, the law being introduced for his benefit. But considered in any point of view, the proceeding at the utmost, can only be considered as erroneous, and not void; whence it will follow, that perjury may be assigned in the oath so taken, while the proceeding stands unreversed. (1 *Vent.* 181—1 *Sid.* 148—*Raym.* 74). Indeed a respectable writer on the criminal law, makes a question, whether a perjury in a Court whose proceedings are afterwards reversed for error, may not still be punished as perjury, notwithstand- such reversal.—(1 *Hawk. P. C.* 432).

It appears to me difficult to distinguish this case from one, where a witness is improperly admitted by the Court and the witness swears falsely. Can it be doubted that he would be indictable for perjury, provided the Court had jurisdiction of the matter?

With respect to the motion in arrest of judgment on account of leaving out the letter *e* in the word *sieve*, I think it is not to be sustained. I know of no authority for arresting judgment for false spelling in an indictment, where the word misspelt is of the same sound, and does not constitute a different word. It was impossible that the Jury could be misled by mistaking the word so spelt for any other in the English Language, except the word intended, viz. a bolter or search.

In the case of the *King* v. *Beach*, (*Cowp.* 280), *Lord Mansfield* said, that the Court had looked into all the cases on the subject, and that the true distinction is, even *in the case of a variance*, that where the omission or addition of a letter does not change the word, so as to make

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it another word, it is not material. Thus, if the misrecited word is in itself a word, though not intelligible with the context, as *air*, for *heir*, there the variance, according to the decisions, is fatal; but not if the mutilated word does not make any other word.—(1 *Doug.* 194, *in notis*). I am consequently of opinion, that the conviction was right.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

The State
v.
Jacob Ellar,
} From Ashe.

Profane Swearing charged to be a public nuisance, is punishable by indictment, notwithstanding the power to proceed summarily, given to the Justices of the Peace by the act of 1741.

The indictment charged, that the Defendant being an evil disposed person, "did, in the public street of Jefferson, profanely curse and swear, and take the name of God in vain, to the evil example, &c. and to the common nuisance of the good citizens of the State."

After a verdict for the State, the Counsel for the Defendant moved in arrest of judgment, upon the ground that the offence was not indictable. His honor Judge STRANGE sustained the motion, and judgment being arrested, the Solicitor appealed.

The *Attorney-General* cited the *State* v. *Kirby* (1 *Murphey* 254) and the *State* v. *Waller* (3 *do.* 229). No Counsel for the Defendant appeared in this Court.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It was held, in the case of the *State* v. *Waller*, that if the offence with which the Defendant then stood charged, had been laid as a common nuisance, and the Jury had so found it, the judg-

ment would have been supported. Drunkenness and profane swearing are placed on the same footing by the act of 1741, c. 30, and where committed in single acts, may be punished summarily by a Justice of the Peace. But where the acts are repeated, and so public as to become an annoyance and inconvenience to the citizens at large, no reason is perceived why they are not indictable as common nuisances. Several offences are stated in the books as so indictable, though not more troublesome to the public than the one before us. A common scold is indictable as a common nuisance; and with equal, if not stronger reason, I should think, a common, profane swearer, may be so considered.

PER CURIAM.—Let the Judgment be reversed.

The State
v.
Jesse Upton, } From Davidson.

Where a case is so defectively stated, as not to enable the Court to perceive the points intended to be presented, a new trial will be awarded.

The prisoner was indicted for the murder of his wife, and tried before his honor Judge DANIEL, on the Fall Circuit of 1826. The following is a copy of that part of the record sent to this Court which is necessary to the elucidation of the case.

"The Court refused to permit the prisoner to give evidence of the declarations of his wife, not in the presence of her husband, and before her death, made to different persons, and at different times, that the Defendant was deranged, or subject to periodical derangement."

"The State enquired of a witness whether the wife of the Defendant had not come to him and requested him to go to her house, and after they got there, the Court

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permitted the charge she made in the presence of the Defendant to be given in evidence, and his denial of the charge, but refused the declarations of the wife made to the witness, at the witness's house, when she first went for him, when the husband was not present."

The Jury having returned a verdict for the State, and a rule for a new trial being discharged, the prisoner appealed.

Nash, for the prisoner, contended, that the case was so defective, that the Court could not see the points intended to be presented for consideration. He cited *Den dem. of Hatton* v. *Dew*, (1 *Law Rep.* 524) *Cowan* v. *Green* (3 *Murph.* 569) *Gilkey* v. *Dickerson*, (2 *Hawks* 241).

The *Attorney-General*, contra.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—I do not know upon what principle the declarations of the wife, made at the witness's house, are admissible in evidence. They could be so only on the ground of their being dying declarations; but it no where appears from the case, that she had then received the fatal wound. Independently of this ground, which cannot be assumed, her sayings touching the insanity of her husband, are not proper evidence, whether they were favorable, or otherwise to him. If material to the defence, it should be shewn by other evidence.

But this case is made up so unsatisfactorily, that it is difficult to collect from it what we are called upon to decide. For this reason alone, I am disposed to grant a new trial.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed, and rule for a new trial made absolute.

IN THE SUPREME COURT,

June Term, A. D. 1827.

Regulæ Generales.

It is ordered, that in all Appeal Causes, whether on the Law or Equity side of the Court, the Counsel for the Appellant shall deliver to the Counsel appearing on the other side, if any, a statement in writing of all the points intended to be made and relied on, at least eight clear days before the day of the argument of the cause—and any point or matter of objection to the judgment or decree below, not contained therein, shall be considered as waived—unless the Court shall, for sufficient reasons offered or appearing, allow or desire that such matter or point may be made and discussed.

And it shall also be the duty of the Counsel for the Appellant to furnish to each of the Judges of this Court (at the least four clear days before the day of argument of any cause) a copy of the statement or statements delivered to the Counsel on the other side.

Leaving with the Clerk or his Deputy for the Counsel for the Appellee, the statement required by this rule, will be a sufficient delivery to the Counsel.

A true copy from the Minutes,

Teste, WM. ROBARDS, Clk.

APPENDIX.

Jonathan Whitaker
v.
Frederick Freeman.

Of several pleas each is separate and independent as if contained in diff rent records: Therefore, where in an action for a libel the Defendant pleaded not guilty and a justification, *it was held*, that the admission of the libel contained in the latter plea, could not be used either to estop the Defendant to insist on his denial, or as evidence to prove the publication on the issue joined on the former plea.

A declaration for a libel must undertake to set out the very words; to give the substance and effect is not sufficient, and if, on the trial, the libel produced does not correspond with that set out, the Plaintiff must fail, since no reason can be assigned why the Plaintiff should not be required to prove what he is required to allege.

This was an action on the case for a libel, tried at the November Term, 1826, of the Circuit Court for the district of North-Carolina, before the Honorable JOHN MARSHALL, Chief-Justice of the United States.

The declaration, besides the usual introductory averments of good character, &c. alleged a special inducement that the Plaintiff was a congregational clergyman and minister of the gospel, and that the Defendant designed to defame him in that character, &c. The declaration then charged the publication of a libel in the form of a letter directed to one H. P. from which particular sentences were selected and stated in various forms, in twenty-five different counts, all exactly alike in the inducements, &c. and setting forth the libellous sentences extracted, not according to the tenor, but charging that the letter contained, amongst other things, "the false, scandalous, malicious and defamatory matter following:"

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The libellous matter was charged in the different counts as follows :

1st Count. "He lived within 30 miles of my father—the reports of his frequently whipping his wife are well known there,"

2. "He was in the habit of whipping his wife."

3. "It was said that he whipped his wife."

4. "It was notorious there that he was in the habit of whipping his wife."

5. "I have it from good authority that he has been guilty of giving his wife repeated whippings."

6. "He has been guilty of stealing wood."

7 "He has been charged with stealing wood."

8. "I have it from good authority that he has been guilty of stealing wood."

9. "I have it from good authority that he has been charged with stealing wood."

10. "If he has credentials with him they are forgeries."

11. "If he has credentials with him they are probably forgeries.

12. "If he has credentials with him they are probably forgeries, or were given him to get rid of him."

13. "If he has credentials they are forged."

14. "If he has credentials they are probably forged."

15 "If he has credentials they are probably forged, or given him to get rid of him."

16. "He is an impostor, and should not be countenanced."

17 "He is an impostor and should not be countenanced as a teacher of youth or preacher of religion."

18. "He is an impostor, and should not be countenanced or employed as a teacher of youth or preacher of religion."

19 "He should not be countenanced as a teacher of youth or preacher of religion."

20. "He should not be employed as a teacher of youth or preacher of religion."

21. "He is an impostor, and should not be employed as a teacher of youth or preacher of religion."

22. "He is an impostor, and should not be countenanced or employed as a teacher of youth or moral instructor."

23. "My object in giving you information is, that he may not be employed as a preacher of religion or instructor of youth."

24 "I give you information that he may not impose himself on other communities."

25. "You are at liberty to use this letter as you think proper, to prevent the people from being imposed on by him."

The declaration also contained a distinct set of counts, alleging the several libellous charges in this form: "they (*inuendo*, the Plaintiff and one Daniel K. Whitaker) lived, &c." in all other respects exactly like the first set.

To this declaration, the Defendant pleaded, 1st, not guilty, and 2d, the truth of the matters contained in the libellous charges as a justification.

On the trial, the letter being produced under a *Subpœna duces tecum*, the material facts of it appeared to be in the following words:

"No sooner did I cast my eye upon that part of a former letter of yours, informing me of your being visited (infested I should say) by two anti-trinitarian preachers—a father and his son, than it was impressed upon my mind, *Whitaker and his Son are the men!* The character of these men I know full well. They are from New-Bedford, Massachusetts, which is within 30 miles of my father's house, and which place I have often visited—and visited this last fall. I never heard any good of them. I have heard from the best authority, much evil. Not that they were capable of doing much hurt by preaching. they were considered by all as unfit to preach—as too *immoral* even to preach socinianism. The older man has been settled over the anti-trinitarian church in New-Bedford a number of years, and had also a school in that place, until last spring or summer. Reports of his *stealing wood, &c. whipping his wife unmercifully*, and such like deeds had become so frequent, and his immoralities and infidelity so notorious, that his people (his church and congregation) were ashamed of him and were anxious to get rid of him. At length (his congregation having dwindled away to almost his own family) and the parish wishing to have another minister, agreed to give him $1200, if he would release them from their obligation to support him, and clear out. He found this for his interest, and left N. B. These two men, no doubt, finding their character gone in Massachusetts, have come to these ends of the earth, hoping to impose upon the good people. The young man has probably taken up preaching since he left his native state. They may have recommendations from those who were willing to have them leave those regions, and cared not for what impositions they might practice elsewhere. Their testimonials, if they have any, may be forged. It is a pity they should be permitted to impose upon the people any where. either as preachers or schoolmasters. I consider them as dangerous men in either occupation.

"You are at liberty to show the above, as far as you may think proper."

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It was insisted, on the part of the Defendant, that the letter produced did not support any one of the counts, and that the Plaintiff was not entitled to a verdict; while on the part of the Plaintiff, it was contended, that there was no material variance between the declaration and the letter, and that if there was, the Defendant, by his plea of justification, which admitted the publication of the libel as charged in the declaration, was estopped to deny the publication; or if he was not technically estopped, yet the admission in that plea was evidence from which the jury upon the plea of not guilty, must find against the Defendant.

These points were fully argued by *Gaston*, for the Plaintiff, and *Badger*, for the Defendant, when the CHIEF JUSTICE expressed a wish that the trial should proceed, reserving these questions for his further consideration; upon which a verdict was taken for the Plaintiff, with an agreement that if the Court should be against the Plaintiff on the matters reserved, the verdict should be set aside and a nonsuit entered.

The case was held under advisement until May Term, 1827, when the CHIEF JUSTICE delivered his opinion as follows:

This is an action on the case, founded on a libel published by the Defendant. He has pleaded not guilty, and has also justified the words as being true.

At the trial, the Plaintiff gave in evidence a letter written by the Defendant to his correspondent in Raleigh, for the purpose of being shewn to others, which contains substantially the charges stated in the declaration, but in different language.

The Plaintiff insisted at the trial, 1st, that the plea of justification admitted the publication of the libel charged in the declaration, and dispensed with the necessity of proving it. 2dly. That the letter given in evidence sup-

ported the declaration.—The Jury found a verdict for the Plaintiff, subject to the opinion of the Court on the two points reserved.

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1. On the first point, the Plaintiff produced cases to show, that the plea of justification contains a formal admission of the words charged in the declaration, and would not be good without such admission. It must confess and avoid the charge.

He then insisted, that this being a confession on record, was stronger than a confession made orally in the country, and estopped the party from denying it. In support of this last proposition, he relied on the generally admitted dignity of record evidence, and cited *Goddard's case* (2 *Co. Rep.* 4, 6.)

In *Goddard's case*, the Court, after saying, "that the jurors who are sworn to say the truth shall not be estopped, for an estoppel is to conclude one to say the truth," added, "but if the estoppel or admittance be within the same record in which issue is joined upon which the jurors shall give their verdict, then they cannot find any thing against that which the parties have affirmed and admitted of record, although the truth be contrary; for a Court ought to give judgment upon a thing confessed by the parties, and the Jurors are not to be charged with any such thing, but only with things in which the parties differ."

In *Goddard's case*, as was very properly remarked by the Counsel for the Defendant, there was a single plea, and the admission and agreement of parties, to which the observation of the Court applies, are made in the particular and single issue which the Jury was sworn to try. The language of the Court is applicable to such a case only. The Jury, though not generally "estopped to say the truth," is estopped "if the admittance be within the same record in which issue is joined upon which the Jurors shall give their verdict." When

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this case was decided, a record contained a single issue, and the word record might be used generally, in the same sense with the word issue. The relative "which," in the last instance, refers to "issue," upon which issue the Jurors shall give their verdict. This is proved clearly by the reason the Court assigns why a Jury is estopped from finding the truth contrary to such admission. It is that "a Court ought to give judgment upon a thing confessed by the parties, and the Jurors are not to be charged with any such thing." Now the Jurors are charged with every issue of the cause, and must pass on every issue. The Court cannot give judgment until a verdict is found on each. Indeed, I do not understand the Plaintiff to contend, that the admission in one plea estops the Jury from finding the truth in an issue made upon a different plea; but that the admissions in one plea may be given in evidence in support of a different issue in the same cause. *Goddard's case* then, turns on a principle entirely distinct from this, and inapplicable to it. In *Kirk* v. *Norvill & Butler* (1 *T. R.* 118) BULLER Justice said, that several pleas in the same cause, were "as unconnected as if they were in separate records."

In England, under the statute of the 4th & 5th of *Anne*, *c.* 16, the Defendant is allowed to plead several pleas with leave of the Court. In commenting upon this statute, *Bacon* says, in his *Abridgment*, (*v.* 5, *p.* 448) "It hath been frequently insisted upon that a Defendant could not, within this act, plead contradictory and inconsistent pleas; as *non assumpsit* and the *statute of limitations*, &c. But the Court has allowed such pleas, "observing, that if the benefit of the statute was to be confined to such pleas as are consistent, it would hardly be possible to plead a special plea and a general issue, the one always denying the charge, the other generally confessing and avoiding it; and the statute itself makes no distinction herein." In conformity with this rule,

the English books on the subject of pleading, in all their forms of special pleas, state the general issue as being first pleaded. This would be entirely useless, if the admissions contained in almost every special plea in bar could be used to disprove the facts alleged in the general issue. The English books do not, I believe, furnish a decision, or even a dictum to countenance the idea that the matter of one plea can be brought in evidence against another. Their entire independence of each other has been often held. In *Grills* v. *Manville & others* (*Willes' Rep.* 378) the attempt was made to aid one plea to which a demurrer had been filed, by an averment in a subsequent plea. Lord Chief-Justice WILLES, in delivering the opinion of the Court, said, "Though he has denied it in his second plea (that the opposite party was seised in fee) that will make no alteration, it being a known rule, and never controverted, that one plea cannot be taken in to help or destroy another, but every plea must stand or fall by itself."

This opinion undoubtedly applies to the sufficiency of a plea in point of law. It asserts that one plea cannot be affected in point of law, by a fact averred in a different plea; not that such facts may not be used as evidence—but it shows that distinct pleas in the same cause are entirely independent on each other, and have no technical connexion. The same principle is laid down in the case of *Kirk* v. *Norvill & Butler*, in first Term Reports. That was an action of trespass, in which the general issue and three special pleas in bar were pleaded. The Jury found three issues for the Plaintiff, and the last for the Defendant. The Plaintiff obtained a rule to show cause why judgment should not be entered up in his favor, because the last plea, on which the verdict was found for the Defendant, was no bar to the action. The defect in the fourth plea was cured by an averment in the second and third; but the Court made the rule absolute;

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and *Buller* said, "There never was such an idea before, as the Counsel against the rule have suggested, that one plea might be supported by what was contained in another. Each plea must stand or fall by itself."

It is admitted, that these cases apply only to the entire independence of different pleas in point of law; but they certainly show that the facts alleged in one plea, has no more influence on an issue made upon a distinct plea in the same cause, than if the same matter had been pleaded in a different cause. Ever since the statute of *Anne*, it has been usual in England, where the Defendant meant to justify, to plead also the general issue. This is so apparently useless, if the plea of justification amounts to a confession, which can be transferred to the general issue, that a Court would not give leave to plead both pleas, where the right depended on the Court, and the Defendant would not ask it, where useless pleas are attended with heavy expences.

The principle in pleading, that a special plea must confess and avoid the fact charged in the declaration, was introduced at a time when the rigid practice of Courts required that every cause should be placed on a single point, and when it was deemed error to plead specially matter which amounted to the general issue;—it was not allowed to deny the fact, and to justify it. The Defendant might select his point of defence; but when selected, he was confined to it. That a single point might be presented to the Jury, he was under the necessity of confessing every thing but that point. The attention of the Jury was not directed to multifarious objects, but confined to one on which alone the cause depended. This rigid rule was undoubtedly productive, in many instances, of great injustice. The Legislature in England thought proper to change it, and to admit of various defences in the same action. But the forms of pleas remained. The permission to put in more than

one with the leave of the Court, did not vary the established forms. The admissions which are contained in one plea, respect only the issue made up on that plea. The purpose for which the rigor of the ancient rule was relaxed by law would be defeated, if the matter of one plea were to destroy another.

There is no more reason that a plea of justification should prove the libel on the issue of not guilty, than that it should support a new action for a libel founded on the plea itself. It contains an averment that the words were true, and if uttered by the Defendant, not in his defence by way of plea, but as a substantive and voluntary allegation, would be the foundation of a new action. But such a plea has never been so considered. Whether the reason is, that the allegation is in the form prescribed by law, which the Defendant must use in order to avail himself of a defence allowed by law; or that the plea is put in by Counsel, and the words are used by him, and are not the words of the Defendant, the reason operates as strongly against their being used as testimony in support of the general issue, as against their being used in support of a new action founded on the plea. Certain it is, that in England, this use has never been made of them.

In the United States generally, the rigor of the ancient rule, that the defence shall be confined to a single point, has been relaxed still further than in England. In most of the States, and North-Carolina is understood to be among them, the Defendant has a legal right, without asking the leave of the Court, to plead as many several matters as may be necessary, or as he may think necessary, for his defence. It would be entirely inconsistent with the spirit and object of these acts, to permit forms of pleading devised at a time when judicial proceedings were regulated on a principle which they were intended to change, to render one of the defences which they au-

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thorise, an absolute nullity. In England this has never been attempted. The Courts there will not exercise the power they possess, to restrain the Defendant from pleading inconsistent pleas, because such restraints would defeat the policy of the act of Parliament. The policy of the acts passed on the same subject in the United States is still more apparent.

It is true, that in one State, the principle maintained by the Plaintiff in this cause, has been sustained. The very respectable Court of Massachusetts has decided, that in an action for slander, the admissions contained in a plea of justification, do of themselves disprove the plea of not guilty. I am far from disregarding any opinion of that Court; but I believe it stands alone, and that no similar decision has been made in any State of the Union.

It constitutes no inconsiderable deduction from the authority of the decision in Massachusetts, that there is reason for the opinion that it was disapproved generally by the bar. The Legislature of that State has enacted, that henceforth, the plea of justification shall not, in an action of slander, be taken as proof that the words were spoken, if not guilty be also pleaded. This act of the Legislature shows, I think, that the general sense of the profession, even in that State, was opposed to the decision of the Court.

I think it a fair construction of the act, which authorises the Defendant to plead several pleas, that he may use each plea in his defence, and that the admissions unavoidably contained in one, cannot be used against him in another. It was therefore incumbent on the Plaintiff in this case, to prove the libel charged in the declaration.

2. Has he done so?

The letter offered in evidence, contains substantially a charge that the Defendant is guilty of facts essentially the same as are stated in the declaration; but the charge is made in words which vary materially from those al-

leged in the declaration, and they also state the fact as varying in form. Does this evidence support this issue on the part of the Plaintiff?

The *Queen* v. *Drake* (3 *Salk.* 224) was an information for a libel, which stated the words according to their tenor. The word "nor" was inserted instead of "not." This variance, though it did not alter the sense, was held fatal. The Court said, that *cujus quidem tenor*, imports a true copy. *Holt* said, a libel may be described either by the sense or by the words; and therefore, an information charging that the Defendant made a writing containing such words is good, and in such case a nice exactness is not required, because it is only a description of the sense and substance of the libel.

In *King* v. *Burr* (12 *Mod.* 218) it was again held, that "according to the tenor and effect following," imported a literal copy. The word "effect" alone, it was said, would have been too uncertain, but that word did not vitiate, and "tenor" was certain.

The language of the Court, in the *Queen* v. *Drake*, would seem to justify the inference, that it is sufficient to state the sense and substance of the words in the information or declaration. If the charge be "that the Defendant made a writing containing such words," that is good; "and in such case a nice exactness is not required, because it is only a description of the sense and substance of the libel." "A nice exactness" in what? I presume, in the proof of the words laid in the declaration. It does not purport to charge the whole libellous matter in the very words used in the libel, but to charge its sense and substance.

The exact extent of this decision is not quite apparent. Whether the very words laid in the declaration must be proved, or the material words will be sufficient; or whether equivalent terms will satisfy the law, remains unexplained. It would be difficult to sustain the proposi-

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tion that the word "tenor" was indispensable, in order to bind the Plaintiff to an exact recital of the words of the libel. That such words as these,—the Defendant made and published of and concerning the Plaintiff "a paper writing in the words following, to-wit, he (the Plaintiff meaning, &c.") would not import a recital of the very words, as much as if the word "tenor" had been inserted. And if the sense and substance is all the charge imports, it is difficult to assign a reason why it would not be sufficient to charge the sense and substance in the declaration. Yet, in the *King* v. *Burr*, the Court said, that to state in the declaration, that the Defendant published a false, scandalous and malicious libel, "according to the effect following," would be too uncertain.

In the *Queen* v. *Drake*, the Court took a distinction between slander written and spoken, which seems founded in reason. "Words are transient, and vanish in the air as soon as spoken, and there can be no tenor of them; but when a thing is written, though every omission of a letter may not make a variance, yet if such omission make a word of another signification, it is fatal."

We are left to conjecture, whether this observation applies to every declaration for written slander, in which words are specified, or to such only as charge the libel according to tenor.

Nelson v. *Sir Woolson Dixie* (*Cases in time of Hardwicke* 305) was an action for words spoken. The words which were spoken to the Plaintiff's servant, were laid in the declaration thus: "Where is that thief your master, that confederate thief with *Barker*, who hath robbed me. I will hang him, by God, damn me if I do not." The variance was, that the words proved were, "I will hang them both," instead of "I will hang him;" and this was held fatal. *Lord Hardwicke* said, "The words laid are not proved. An action for words, may either lay the particular words spoken, as in this case, or may

set out the substance of the words; and if the substance only be set out, as that the Defendant charged the Plaintiff with such or such a crime, &c. then it is sufficient to prove the substance of the words, and that was *Stayley's case*, and there are precedents of the sort in *Rastal's Entries*, and the substance is laid in latin; but where the very words are laid, those words must be proved as laid though the rules are not now so strict as formerly; for if there should be a variation in the order of the words as proved to be spoken from what is laid in the declaration, so it be agreeable in substance, it is sufficient."

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It is not stated in the report of this case, that the declaration charged the slanderous words to be spoken according to tenor, but that it purported to state the words themselves; and in such case it was held necessary to prove them as laid. It is observable too, that the variance does not consist in the slanderous words themselves, but in additional words, which are perhaps explanatory of the meaning of the words importing the slander. Nor is there any distinction as to the meaning of the slanderous words themselves, between threatening to hang both the thieves, and threatening to hang the Plaintiff only. That this variance was held fatal, shows how nearly it was then supposed the proof must come to a declaration purporting to recite the slanderous words.

The opinion expressed by *Lord Hardwicke*, that the declaration may set out the substance of the words, as that the Defendant charged the Plaintiff with such or such a crime, is contradicted in other cases, and seems now to be overruled in England; though in *Richardson's Practice*, a declaration in that form is inserted, and has been supported, I am told, in the Court of Appeals of Virginia. It has also been supported in Pennsylvania, *Kennedy* v. *Lowry* (1 *Binny* 393). In England, it is certainly held bad. In 3 *Maul & Selwyn* 110, the Plaintiff charged the Defendant, in one count, with speaking false, scandalous and malicious words, to the *effect* fol-

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lowing, &c. This was held bad after verdict. The Court observed, that in *Dr. Sacheverel's case*, the Judges said, "By the law of England, and constant practice in all prosecutions by indictment or information for crimes or misdemeanors by writing or speaking, the particular words supposed to be criminal ought to be expressly specified in the indictment or information." The Court added, "there seems no reason for any difference in this respect between civil and criminal cases. The action arises *ex delicto*." A reason assigned for this rule is, that were it otherwise, "it would be almost impossible to plead a recovery in one action in bar of another."

In *Wood* v. *Brown* (6 *Taunton* 168) the declaration charged the Defendant with publishing a libel "purporting, &c." On demurrer, this was held bad, because by such a mode of declaring, the Plaintiff would withdraw from the Defendant the power of demurring to the words of the libel.

In *Zenobio* v. *Axtell* (6 *Term* 162) where the libel was published in a foreign language, it was held ill to set forth its substance in a translation. The declaration ought to state the libel in the original language. In *Wood* v. *Brown* (1 *Marshall* 522) the declaration charged the Defendant with publishing "a certain false, scandalous, malicious and defamatory libel, *purporting thereby* that the Plaintiff's beer was of a bad quality, &c." The Court seemed to think, that what was said by *Lord Holt*, in the *Queen* v. *Drake*, furnished a strong argument in favor of the opinion, that it was sufficient to set forth the sense and substance of the libel. "Here however the Plaintiff had neither stated the words nor the substance. He had merely stated the conclusions which he himself had drawn from the supposed libel, and which might be very different from those which the Court would draw from it." The Chief-Justice said, "We will consider of this case;—I certainly have always thought it was necessary to state the libel."

After taking time to consider, *Lord Chief-Justice Gibbs* said, "We have looked into the case, and into the other cases on the subject, and though in some of the cases there are expressions which have carried this doctrine farther than was at first intended, we think it impossible that this declaration can be supported. It charges the Defendant with publishing a libel *purporting* as is therein stated. In all actions for libels, it is the province of the Court to say, whether the expressions complained of amount to a libel or not; and if this mode of declaring could be supported, the Court would lose that jurisdiction, and it would be given to the Jury."

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It has been held very clearly, (2 *East* 426) that, in a plea justifying slander because the Defendant heard it from another, it is not sufficient to allege, that the person referred to spoke words to the effect of those on which the action is brought. The words themselves must be set forth in the plea.

If the words themselves must be set forth, as seems to be the prevailing opinion, it is difficult to assign a sufficient reason, especially in actions for written slander, why the words should not be proved. The distinction between charging a libel according to tenor, and charging it in words purporting to be the very words of the libel, seems entirely arbitrary, and one for which no satisfactory reason can be assigned. Its effect would naturally be to discard the word tenor from every declaration, as being at the same time useless and dangerous. But it is not easy to reconcile the rule which requires the words themselves to be stated, with that which dispenses with their being proved. It would seem to consist with reason and with general legal principle, that in all cases where the declaration professes to charge the very words, the Plaintiff should be held to prove those words, at least if they are in writing. The cases on this subject however, are very unsatisfactory.

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Mr. Justice Buller, in his *Nisi Prius*, p. 5, says, "It was formerly holden that the Plaintiff must prove the words precisely as laid; but that strictness is now laid aside, and it is sufficient for the Plaintiff to prove the substance of them."

Mr. Buller does not inform us, whether this rule is confined to words spoken, or extends also to libels. His examples are of oral slander. There is too wide a range for those who are to determine in what cases the evidence proves the substance of the charge. The books do not, and perhaps cannot, furnish complete satisfaction on this point. It is clear, that words spoken in the second person, will not sustain a declaration charging the same words, if alleged in the declaration to be spoken of the Plaintiff in the third person; and it is also clear, that the slightest variation between the evidence and the charge, if it may indicate a different thing, is fatal.—The case of *Walters* v. *More* (2 *Barnwell & Alderson*, 756) is a strong example of this. The declaration charged that the Defendant said of the Plaintiff, "*This* is my umbrella, and he stole it from my back door." The evidence was, that the Defendant said, "*It* is my umbrella, &c." The variance was held fatal, because the words charged in the declaration applied to a particular umbrella which was present, and the words proved applied to an umbrella which was absent. And yet the words "*it* is my umbrella, &c." may be spoken of a particular umbrella then present. There are many cases to the same effect; but they all turn upon the principle that the difference in language, though very slight, may denote a different offence. In such cases, there is a plain and sufficient reason for holding the variance fatal.

In the *King* v. *May* (*Doug.* 183) it was held, in an indictment for perjury, the words "in manner and form following, that is to say, &c." do not bind the party to recite the instrument *verbatim*. This was an indict-

ment against *May* for perjury, in an indictment against the present prosecutor for an assault. It referred to the former indictment, and added, "which indictment was presented in manner and form following, that is to say," and then proceeded to set forth the indictment *in hæc verba*, but omitted a word contained in the original indictment. It was admitted not to have been necessary to recite the former indictment; but it was contended, that the prosecutor had undertaken to recite it, and that having done so, was bound to set it forth *verbatim*. A verdict was given for the Plaintiff, and a rule was moved to shew cause why the verdict should not be set aside. The objection had been made at the trial before BULLER Justice, but was overruled by the Judge, who said, "that the word *tenor* had so strict and technical a meaning as to make it necessary to recite *verbatim*; but that by the expression in this case, nothing more than a substantial recital was requisite, and that the variance here was only in matter of form." The rule was granted, but was afterwards given up, and judgment was pronounced against the Defendant. This, it is true, was not an action for a libel; and it was not necessary for the action to set forth the paper in which the misrecital, by the omission of a word, took place. But it is a very strong case to prove what I have said appears to me to be very unreasonable, that the Plaintiff is not held to a strict recital, unless the word *tenor* is used. Still it is difficult to reduce the materiality of the variance to certain rules.

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Campagnon & wife v. *Martin* (2 *Blac. Rep.* 790) was an action for words, in which it was held, that though all the actionable words laid in the declaration were not proved, the Plaintiff might have a verdict for such as were proved. That however was an action for words spoken, not written, and an action was sustainable for the words proved. Had the words which were not proved

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been left out of the declaration, no doubt would have existed in the case; and it was thought material that the Judge directed the Jury to disregard those words in estimating damages.

Tobart v. *Tipper* (1 *Campbell*) was an action for a libel. The words charged in the declaration were: "My sarcastic friend by leaving out, &c." The libel produced in evidence was, "My sarcastic friend *Moros* by leaving out, &c. The sole variance was, that the word *Moros*, which existed in the libel, was omitted in the declaration. And yet the Reporter does not state that the declaration charged the words according to *tenor*. If an exact recital was unnecessary in an action for a libel, where the declaration purports to state the libel in terms, I feel some difficulty in accounting for this case. The omission of the word *Moros*, does not seem to me to be a substantial variance.

In 7 *Taunton* 204, the declaration charged the Defendant with saying "*Hancock's* wife is a great thief, and ought to have been transported some years ago." The words proved were, "*Hancock's* wife is a damned bad one, and ought to have been transported seven years ago." The variance was held fatal.

In *Barnes* v. *Holloway* (8 *T. R.* 150) words laid affirmatively, were proved to have been spoken interrogatively, and this variance was held fatal. Yet it is clear that an interrogation may imply an affirmation, and may be so understood by the hearers. The Court said, whatever the party may mean, the words must be proved as they are laid. There is "a manifest distinction between the same idea conveyed by words spoken affirmatively, and put interrogatively."

The person who looks into this subject, will be surprised at finding how very unsatisfactory the cases are.

I will now compare the libel adduced in evidence with that charged in the declaration.

The CHIEF-JUSTICE then proceeded to dissect the letter, and to compare with critical exactness, the several sentences it contained, with the counts in the declaration intended to set them forth, and observed, that though the imputations cast upon the character of the Plaintiff were of equal atrocity with those charged in the declaration, and in some instances, approached so nearly as to be substantially the same, yet were they, in no instance, exactly the same; and the verbal variations were such, as at least to make the charges susceptible of a slightly different meaning from the proof.—He concluded by declaring, that, upon the principles he had stated, such variance though slight, was fatal, and that consequently, the verdict must be set aside, and a

NONSUIT ENTERED.

NOTE—It is proper to state, that the declaration was drawn without the inspection of the letter declared on, which was never seen by the Plaintiff's Counsel, until produced on the trial, and the only information possessed of its contents, was derived from the recollection of witnesses who had heard it read. It should also be added, that after the Nonsuit was entered, the CHIEF-JUSTICE, on motion of the Plaintiff's Counsel, directed, that on payment of the costs, the Nonsuit should be set aside, and the Plaintiff allowed to file a new declaration.

CASES

ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN THE

SUPREME COURT

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA.

DECEMBER TERM, 1827.

Thomas D. Watts
v.
Thomas Scott,
} From Orange.

The act of 1802, c. 29, regulating the town of Hillsborough, enables the Treasurer of the Corporation to sue, in his own name, for penalties incurred under the by-laws authorised by that act, as well as for those incurred under the act itself.

The Plaintiff, as Treasurer of the town of Hillsborough, warranted the Defendant for a penalty incurred by the breach of an ordinance, passed by the Commissioners in the year 1822.

In the Superior Court, on the last Circuit, the Plaintiff relied upon the fifth section of the act of 1802, c. 29, entitled "An act for the better regulation of the town of Hillsborough;" which section is as follows: "And be it further enacted, that the Commissioners of said town shall hereafter appoint a Treasurer, who, &c. and it shall be the duty of said Treasurer, in his own name, to sue for and recover all forfeitures which shall accrue under this, or any other act heretofore passed and in force for the regulation of said town;" and contended, that under it, he was entitled to maintain the present action in his own name. His honor Judge STRANGE being of

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a different opinion, nonsuited the Plaintiff who appealed to this Court.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

Badger, for the Defendant, submitted the case.

Hall, Judge.—The by-law under which the penalty in question is claimed, is not stated in the case; but we are told that the Plaintiff founds his right to sue for it, under the 5th section of the act of 1802, c. 29. That section declares, that "it shall be the duty of said Treasurer, in his own name, to sue for and recover all forfeitures which shall accrue *under this or any other act heretofore passed.*"

Now the penalty sought to be recovered, is not a penalty accruing for a direct breach of the act itself, as where the Constable refuses to execute a warrant, or process, directed to him from the Magistrate of Police; but I think, by a liberal construction, it is a penalty *accruing under the act.* If the Commissioners are authorised to make by laws, (which is not disputed,) no doubt penalties are imposed for a breach of them, and such penalties indirectly accrue under the provisions of the act which gave the power of imposing them, although they accrued directly under the by-law. No inconvenience can result from this construction of the act. The case is substantially within its meaning.—I therefore think, the nonsuit should be set aside, and a new trial granted.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed, and a new trial granted.

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William Brittain, ex'r. of Stephen Brown
v.
Thomas G. Johnson.
} From Northampton.

The rule respecting notice to endorsers, varies with the pursuits of the parties. The same strictness is not required between farmers resident in the country, as between merchants resident in towns. In the first case, what is due diligence, must be left to the Jury under the direction of the Court.

This was an action commenced before a Justice of the Peace against the Defendant, as endorser of a single bond, dated February 13, 1825, and payable one day after date. The endorsement was stated to be for value received of the Plaintiff's testator, and was dated February 16, 1825. On the trial, before RUFFIN Judge, it was in evidence that the obligor, the Plaintiff's testator, and the Defendant, were all farmers; that the obligor and the Defendant lived together, and that the Plaintiff's testator resided in the same county, about seven miles from them. On the Saturday before the last Sunday in February, 1825, or on the Sunday next before the last, (which day was not positively proved,) the Plaintiff's testator made a demand on the obligor, who refused to pay the bond. Notice of this was given to the Defendant on the next day, and he requested that the obligor might be pushed. On the next Monday a warrant was taken out against both the obligor and the Defendant; the Constable was directed to serve it on the obligor, and notify the Defendant of the fact, and if he did not then take up the bond, to execute it on him also. The Defendant refused to pay the amount due on the bond, and was warranted. On the day of trial, a Justice could not be had, and the warrant was discontinued.

Afterwards, the present warrant was sued out against the Defendant alone, the obligor having absconded.

The presiding Judge instructed the Jury, that if they

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believed the testimony, the Plaintiff was in law entitled to recover. A verdict being returned according to the charge, the Defendant appealed.

At the last June term, the cause was submitted, by *Hogg*, for the Plaintiff, no Counsel appearing for the Defendant.

Cur. adv. vult.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—Where the parties all reside in the same town, and are engaged in mercantile pursuits, or have transactions with a bank, there is a common understanding, that the demand upon the maker must be made without delay, and notice promptly given to the endorser. The application of the strict rule to persons so situated, can seldom be productive of injustice, and this Court has considered itself warranted in requiring the utmost diligence under such circumstances. But the existence of such a rule among farmers living on their plantations, has never been recognized, and could not operate without manifest wrong. It would be unreasonable to require that a person in the country, receiving an endorsed note, should neglect the concerns of his plantation to attend solely to that particular business. He usually calculates on meeting the maker on the next occasion which calls the citizens together—a muster, a sale or a court, and then making a demand without neglecting other affairs; and in this arrangement there seems to be a tacit acquiescence.

Though it may be inconvenient to have several rules, applicable to different classes of persons, it is confessedly more so, to have one applied to all, which is wholly unsuited to the habits, transactions, and experience of the greater number. It is impossible to lay down a rule in the abstract, which is equally just in its bearing on all persons to be affected by it; it must depend upon the circumstances of the case, and must be determined by the Jury, under the directions of the Court. I think

the facts of the case are such, as amount in law to reasonable diligence, considered in relation to the pursuits and the residence of the parties respectively, and that there was no error in the charge of the Court.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Den ex. dem. of Jonathan S. Tayloe & another v. Fen & David Gaskins, } From Bertie.

A sale made by the Sheriff on the return-day of the *Fi. fa.* is good.

EJECTMENT, and on the trial the case was, that the lessors of the Plaintiff claimed the premises under a deed from the Sheriff of Bertie. The judgment and execution were regular; but the sale was made by the Sheriff on the second Monday of August, 1825, which was the return day of the writ.

His honor Judge MARTIN, instructed the Jury, that the sale was good in law. A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Appellant, submitted the case, only referring to *Doe ex dem.* of *Basden* v. *McKinne*, (4 *Hawks* 279).

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The lessors of the Plaintiff claim title under a Sheriff's sale, made on the day the *Fi. fa.* was returnable; and the only question in the case is, whether such a sale is legal? It has been repeatedly decided, that the Sheriff may lawfully execute an execution on the day it is returnable. As to chattels, if he levy before, he may sell after the return-day; and as to land, a sale on the day is unquestionably valid. The

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general rule is explicitly stated in 1 *Salk.* 321, and the cases there cited. The case cited for the Defendant, from 4th *Hawks*, was where the sale took place more than a year after the *teste* of the execution, and without a *venditioni exponas*; where the writ had never been returned, and the endorsement of the levy made under questionable circumstances, being after the sale. There the execution was dead in law; here it was in full vigor.

The judgment should be affirmed.

HALL, Judge.—The question made in this case is, whether the Sheriff can legally sell lands on the first day of the term to which the execution is returnable? Against it, is cited *Basden* v. *McKinne.* In that case, the Sheriff sold about two years after the execution was returnable and without any new execution. But this question is put at rest by the judgment given in the case of *Lanier* v. *Stone*, (1 *Hawks* 329). It is there stated to be the daily practice, and no inconvenience has been experienced from it. It is often done at the importunity of Defendants, to give them the longest possible time to raise the money.

The rule for a new trial must be discharged.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Doe ex dem. of Hosea Galloway et al.
v.
Roe & Peter Yates,
} From Beaufort.

The probate of a will, under the act of 1784, sec. 5, is good, if the place of its deposit be proved by one witness only.

EJECTMENT, tried before DONNELL, Judge, on the last Fall Circuit. The lessors of the Plaintiff claimed by descent from *Thomas Yates*; the Defendant, as his devisee, and the only question was, whether the will was properly proved.

The Jury returned a special verdict, the material fact of which was, the probate of the will of *Thomas Yates*, which was as follows: "*Michael Hill*, *George Hill*, "and *Terence Delaney*, being introduced to prove the "same, who being duly sworn, *Michael Hill* declared on "oath, that he was well acquainted with the handwrit- "ing of *Thomas Yates*, deceased; that he verily be- "lieved the paper purporting to be the will and testa- "ment of said *Thomas Yates*, was in the proper hand- "writing, as also the signature of the said *Thomas* "*Yates*; that after the death of said *Thomas Yates*, he "was at the house of said *Thomas Yates*, and *Rachel* "*Yates*, the widow of said deceased, brought the will to "him, taking it out of a chest, in which he believes the "deceased usually kept his valuable papers." The other two witnesses only deposed to the handwriting of the testator, and said nothing of the place in which the paper was found. If the will was sufficiently proved, the verdict was to be entered for the Defendant; if not, for the lessors of the Plaintiffs.

Upon this verdict, his honor the presiding Judge, gave judgment for the Defendant, from which the lessors of the Plaintiff appealed.

The cause was submitted, without argument, by *Gaston* and *Hogg*, for the lessors of the Plaintiffs, and by *Badger*, for the Defendant.

Hall, Judge.—It appears to me, that the judgment given in the Superior Court, upon the special verdict, was correct. The act of 1824, (*Rev. c.* 225,) requires that the signature and handwriting of the testator should be proved by three witnesses. Here this has been done. The other circumstances attending the probate, such as with whom the will was deposited for safe-keeping, or where it was found, are left by the act to be established by the same evidence that is ordinarily used in other cases. To establish these, three witnesses are not in-

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dispensable; the testimony offered was relevant and proper, and if believed, sufficient to authorise the probate.

I therefore think, the judgment of the Superior Court should be affirmed.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

John Anderson & another
v.
Alfred M. Hunt & Adam Hawkins,
} From Franklin.

The acts of 1817 & 1820 (chapters 937 & 1046) requiring joint suits to be brought against the obligor and endorsers of bonds, &c. do not prevent the Defendants from demanding separate trials.

Applications for separate trials, should be made at an early stage in the cause.

An application, made after the cause was called, rejected, as too late.

Debt upon the single bond of the Defendant *Hunt*, payable to the Defendant *Hawkins*, and by him assigned to the Plaintiffs. The action was commenced in the County Court on the 28th of May, 1822. At June Term following, the Defendants jointly pleaded "*payment and a set off*," to which there was a replication to the contrary. At the next term, viz. at September 1822, leave was given to the Defendants to amend their pleas, when *Hunt* pleaded the general issue, and specially, *that the bond was given upon a gambling consideration*. At the same time the Defendant *Hawkins* also pleaded the general issue. The Plaintiffs obtained a verdict in the County Court upon the issues made by the above pleas, from which the Defendants appealed.

In the Superior Court, before a trial, had at the Spring Term of 1822, the Defendant *Hunt* filed an affidavit alleging that he had no means of establishing his defence, under the statute against gambling, but from the testimony of his co-defendant, that he had filed a bill in Equi-

ty for a discovery, and that the Defendant *Hawkins*, had not answered it. The cause stood for trial until the Spring Term of 1827, when before RUFFIN Judge, after the cause was called, and before the Jury was charged, it was moved on the part of the Defendant *Hunt*, that the trial should be severed, and the Jury charged with the case, as to one of the Defendants only at a time. This motion was supported on the ground that the act authorising makers and indorsers to be sued jointly, was intended for their protection; that the demands were in their nature reversal, although a joint remedy was given, and the statute was not passed to deprive the Defendants of any advantage, which they had before its enactment. The Counsel avowed the object of the motion, which was to enable the Defendant *Hunt*, to establish his plea by the testimony of the Defendant *Hawkins*. His Honor acquiesced in the reasoning of the Defendant's Counsel, but thought that the motion was made at too late a period, the appearance term, or some early stage in the cause, being the proper time. The motion was therefore disallowed.

The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiffs against the Defendant *Hunt*, and found for the Defendant *Hawkins*, upon the general issue. Whereupon the Defendant *Hunt*, appealed.

The cause was submitted without argument, by *Badger & W. H. Haywood*, for the Plaintiffs, and by *Seawell*, for the Defendant.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—I am of opinion that the decision of the Superior Court was correct, under the circumstances of the case; and is shewn to be so, by the reasoning of the Judge who tried the cause. To this it may be added, that if the motion had been made at an earlier stage of the cause, it would have enabled the Plaintiff to meet the testimony of *Hawkins* with counter

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evidence, if it existed—a preparation he could not make, when the severance was made immediately before the trial. It is much more likely that justice should be duly administered, when the Plaintiff is apprized in time, that one Defendant is severed, in order that he may be a witness, than that the trial should immediately follow the severance. It depends, after all, upon the exercise of a sound discretion in the Court, as to the time when the motion should be made; and though the claim to sever may be founded on right, since the law was introduced for the benefit of drawers and endorsers, yet some limitation in point of time must be settled in practice, as to the time of moving it.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

Samuel Greenlee
v.
John B. Tate & others, heirs of William Tate,
} From Burke.

It is fraudulent in law for the grantee to survey his own entry.—Therefore, when this fact was found by the Jury, and further, that the survey was fairly made, it was held that the grant must be vacated.

This was a petition to vacate a grant. From the petition it appeared, that the grant to the ancestor of the Defendants, issued in November, 1802; that in July, 1820, a grant for a part of the same land issued to the Plaintiff. The petition charged, that *William Tate*, the grantee in the first grant, surveyed and located his warrant of survey himself.

From the petition and answer, the following issues were made up, and submitted to a Jury:

1. Was the land surveyed according to law, and were the chain-carriers sworn?

2. Did *William Tate*, enterer and grantee, survey for himself?

3. Did *William Tate* lay before the County Surveyor, the survey made by him, and was the same ratified and signed by the County Surveyor?

4. Was there any fraud in surveying the land, or in obtaining the grant which issued to *William Tate?*

The Jury being instructed by his Honor, Judge STRANGE, that it was not fraudulent *per se*, for the grantee to survey his own entry, found,

1. That the land was surveyed according to law, and that the chain-carriers were sworn.

2. That *William Tate*, enterer and grantee, surveyed for himself.

3. That *William Tate* did lay before the County Surveyor, the survey made by him, and that the same was ratified and signed by the County Surveyor.

4. That there was no fraud in surveying the land, or in obtaining the grant which issued to *William Tate.*

Upon this verdict, judgment was rendered for the Defendants; from which the Plaintiff appealed.

The *Attorney-General* and *Devereux*, for the Plaintiff, contended, that it was against public policy to permit the grantee to survey his own entry. (*Avery* v. *Walker* 1 *Hawks* 140).

Wilson, contra.

HALL Judge.—The question in this case, lies within narrow limits. It turns upon the fact, that the land in controversy, was surveyed by the ancestor of the Defendants, who entered it, and to whom a grant issued.

The principle which must decide this case against the Defendants, was established in the case of *Avery* v. *Walker*. It is there established, that no Deputy Surveyor shall be permitted to survey land for himself, and to that case I refer, instead of repeating the reasons there given in support of this position. The grant must be vacated.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and judgment for the Plaintiff.

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Moses D. Smith et ux.
v.
James Yeates.
} From Hertford.

The act of 1806, requiring gifts of slaves to be authenticated by writing, cannot be evaded by a fictitious sale; therefore where the donor gave the donee the purchase money, and then sold and delivered the slave, receiving back the money—this was held to be a gift, and void without a deed.

It seems, that a writing conveying a slave, is void as a bill of sale, or a deed of gift, unless attested by a subscribing witness.

It also seems, that the sale and delivery of a slave, is good without a bill of sale, notwithstanding the act of 1821.

DETINUE for negro *Tony*, tried before his honor Judge MARTIN, on the last circuit. On the trial, the Plaintiff offered in evidence the following paper, which was proved and registered:

"Received of *Mariana Lewis* ten dollars in cash, it being for a cer-
"tain negro boy *Tony*, May 18th, 1822.

"JAMES JOHNSON."

The wife of *Johnson* proved, that *Mariana Lewis*, who afterwards intermarried with the Plaintiff, resided with her at the house of her husband—that before the date of the instrument, she had heard *Johnson* express an intention of giving *Tony* to *Mariana*. That on the 18th day of May, 1822, *Johnson* repeated this declaration, but observed, that he could not give the negro, unless some money was paid him by *Mariana*, and said if she would give him ten dollars, *Tony* should be hers. *Mariana* replied that she had not the money; he told her that she could borrow it of his wife. The money was accordingly produced by the witness, and handed to *Mariana*, who gave it to *Johnson*, upon which he wrote the instrument and delivered it, the boy being present.

The Defendant claimed title under the will of *Johnson*, of a subsequent date.

His Honor instructed the Jury that to constitute a valid bill of sale, the instrument must contain some words,

shewing an intention of passing the property. That if the writing was not a good bill of sale, they were to enquire from the evidence, whether there had been a sale, and an actual delivery. If there had been a sale, accompanied with a delivery, the property in the slave passed, notwithstanding the act of 1821, although there was no bill of sale. And that lending, or even giving the money by *Johnson's* wife, would not invalidate an actual sale accompanied by a delivery.

The Counsel for the Defendant, moved the Judge to instruct the Jury, that if they thought the ten dollars was not in fact lent or given, by *Johnson* to *Mariana*, and that he did not mean to give her credit for the amount, but furnished them to her, and received them back, merely colourably, and to make a gift, under the pretence and form of a sale, that the property did not pass.

The Judge declined giving such instructions, and the Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, whereupon the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Defendant, insisted that the Judge erred in refusing to instruct the Jury, that if they believed the loan of the money was merely a colour, the property did not pass. He contended that in law, the money of the wife was the money of the husband, and that the transaction was tantamount to a direct gift, and if supported would repeal the act of 1806.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

HALL, Judge.—With respect to the act of 1821, concerning the sale of slaves, accompanied with a delivery, the inclination of my mind is with the Judge below. I also agree with him that the receipt is inoperative as a bill of sale, if for no other reason, because it has no subscribing witness to it; (*Rev. ch.* 225,) for the same reason, it cannot be supported as a deed of gift, (*Rev. ch.*

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701). The question then is, was there a sale and delivery of the negro in dispute.

The receipt is evidence that ten dollars was paid, but the circumstances attending the payment are before us. From them it appears, there was in fact, no payment made by the Plaintiff. The money was in reality, paid by *Johnson* to himself, so that although the Jury found a delivery, the payment did not amount to such a consideration, as to make it a *sale* of the slave. If then there was a delivery, but upon no consideration, it was a gift; but that, by the act of 1806, (*Rev. ch.* 701,) is void, because not authenticated by deed. A sale, completed by delivery, requires no such evidence. Disguise this case as you will, it is only a gift. If it is considered as a sale, the act of 1806 may be evaded, by the consideration of a pepper-corn.

I think there should be a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

William Davidson, adm'r. of Archibald Frew, *v.* James Cowan, } From Mecklenburg.

A sheriff should not be permitted to amend his return, to the injury of strangers to the record, and this especially after the lapse of sixteen years.

But when on a rule obtained, he was directed to amend, *held*, that the opposite party could not appeal from the order.

The Plaintiff, on the Spring Circuit of 1827, obtained a rule upon the Defendant to show cause why a former Sheriff of Mecklenburg should not amend his return to a writ of *Fieri facias* against one *David Cowan*, which issued on the 21st of June, 1810, and was returnable to the ensuing term of the Superior Court for that county.

Upon cause being shewn, the facts were, that the writ came to the hands of the Sheriff on the 4th of October,

1810, who levied it upon sundry negroes, but neglected to endorse a return of the levy. Before the next term of the Court, the Defendant in the execution died, an *alias fieri facias* issued, the *teste* of which overreached the time of his death. Under this writ, the negroes were sold by the Sheriff, and the Plaintiff's intestate became the purchaser. In the year 1821, the same negroes came to the possession of the Defendant in the rule, who claimed under the widow of *David Cowan*.

An action of Detinue was pending between the parties to the rule, in which the Plaintiff sought to recover the negroes of the Defendant—and the object in obtaining the rule was, to enable the present Plaintiff to use the return, now sought to be made, as evidence in that action.

His honor Judge STRANGE, made the rule absolute; whereupon the Defendant appealed.

Gaston, for the Appellant, contended, that it was inconvenient and dangerous to alter a record sixteen years after it had been perfected. (*Potter* v. *Briggs*, 1 *Cain's Rep.* 57.) That the alteration might be prejudicial to the parties to the record, between whom it is evidence. (*Gifford* v. *Woodgate*, 11 *East.* 296—*Starkie*, 4 *part.* 1044.)

Wilson, contra.

HALL, Judge.—I think the proceeding in the Superior Court was irregular, because an alteration was suffered to be made in a record, at the instance of one who was not a party to it, and whose right might be affected by it. Besides, the alteration, at this distance of time, may injure the rights of third persons, held under the record, as it originally stood. This seems to be the object now in view; for as the negroes were not levied upon, as appears by the Sheriff's return, under the execution which issued in 1810, but were sold under that which issued in 1811, *after the death of David Cowan*,

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it is intended by the proposed alteration, to validate that sale, and of course, to affect the title of *James Cowan*, to the same property, acquired in 1821, under *Ann Cowan*. Be this as it may, I think the Court erred, in permitting the alteration to be made. This case, however, is similar to that of *Carter* v. *Graves*, (*ante* 74) and the appeal cannot be considered as taken from a regular proceeding in the Court below; it must therefore, be dismissed, but the Appellant is not bound to pay costs to the Appellee.

PER CURIAM.—Appeal dismissed, each party to pay his own costs.

Snode B. Carraway
v.
Abner Burbank,
} From Washington.

An act of ownership over personal property, inconsistent with the rights of others, is a conversion. Therefore, where an administrator exposes property of his intestate, at public sale, and buys it in himself, this is a conversion as to persons having a title to the property.

TROVER for a horse, and on the trial, before MARTIN Judge, the facts were, that the horse had belonged to the Plaintiff, who sold him to one *Coakley*, upon condition, that if the money was not paid by a specified time, that the title should return to the Plaintiff. Before the day of payment, *Coakley* died, and administration upon his estate was committed to the Defendant, who set up the horse at public vendue and bought it himself. There was some contradiction in the testimony as to the character of the sale to *Coakley*, upon which it is not material to remark. His Honor instructed the Jury, that if they believed the evidence of the sale by the Defendant, and the purchase by himself, it did not, in law, amount to a conversion. That the Plaintiff should have proved

a demand of the horse and a refusal to deliver on the part of the Defendant, which would have been evidence of a conversion. The Jury returned a verdict for the Defendant, and the Plaintiff appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by *Gaston* and *Devereux*, for the Defendant. No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

HENDERSON, Judge.—Conversion is an act of ownership, exercised over the personal chattel of another, inconsistent with the owner's right. It must be an act, bare words will not do. Words however may qualify an act, and shew its character. A refusal to deliver upon demand, is not the conversion; but it is the possession afterwards, which is qualified by the refusal, and shewn to be adverse, after the right to possess is put at an end, by the demand of the owner. Putting up this horse for sale, as the property of his intestate, by the Defendant, although he bid him in himself, is an unequivocal act shewing the nature of his possession, and declaring it to be adverse to the right of the owner. A demand is not required, to give the Defendant an opportunity of avoiding a suit, by delivering up the property in dispute; but to put an end to the Defendant's right to possess, which before might be lawful, as in the case of the finder, or of the owner's bailee. The detention afterwards is the conversion. And if before the demand, possession is wrongfully parted with, this is itself a conversion. Or the Defendant may be concluded, by his own wrongful act, from setting up as a defence, his want of possession at the time of the demand.—There must be a new trial.

HALL, Judge.—Whether the sale by the Plaintiff to the Defendant's intestate was conditional, or whether it was absolute, and time given to pay the purchase-money, was properly left to the Jury. As to the second question relating to the sale of the horse, which is relied on as a

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Carroway v. Burbank.

conversion—if the horse had been purchased by a third person and the money paid to the Defendant; or if the money had not been paid, it would have amounted to a conversion, as it would have been an exercise of ownership over him. As to this question, the fact that the Defendant became the purchaser, can make no difference, he thereby evinced his intention to become the owner.

It is said, in *Bacon's Abridg.* (*Trover B.*) that every disposition of property as a man's own, is a conversion. If one dispose of another's property, for the benefit of a third person, this is a conversion. If a person intrusted with another's goods, places them in the hands of a third person, contrary to orders, it is a conversion. (*Syds.* v. *Hay*, 4 *Term. Rep.* 260.) Every unlawful intermeddling with the goods of another, and exercising acts of ownership over them, is a conversion. I therefore think, the rule for a new trial should be made absolute.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It is not necessary to prove a demand and refusal, where the Plaintiff can show an actual conversion. If a person purchase another's goods, from one having no right to sell them, and takes them into possession, it is assuming upon himself the property and right of disposing of another's goods, and amounts to a conversion. The Defendant's possession and claim were adverse to the Plaintiff's right; and the possessing himself of the horse under such circumstances, constitutes the cause of action.—There should be a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and a new trial granted.

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O. Picot, adm'r of }
Luke Legget, } From Washington.
v.
Thomas Sanderson, }

livery is essential to a gift. Where the obligee gives the obli-
r an order on his agent for the delivery of the bond, which was
t obeyed—it was held, that the gift being incomplete, might be
voked—and that resuming the possession and bringing suit, was
revocation.

DEBT, upon the single bond of the Defendant, paya-
to the Plaintiff's intestate. On the trial, before MAR-
r Judge, the Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff,
ject to the opinion of the Court upon the following
ts. After the bond became due, the Plaintiff's intes-
e voluntarily, and without consideration, drew an or-
r on his agent, in whose hands the bond was placed
collection, directing him to deliver it up to the De-
dant. This direction was not obeyed by the agent,
o, upon the obligee's death, handed it to the Plain-
, by whom this action was brought.

His Honor, thinking that these facts formed no bar to
e action, judgment was entered up for the Plaintiff—
om which the Defendant appealed.

Devereux, for the Defendant, submitted the case with-
t argument. No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The order for the delivery of
the bond is clearly not good, as a payment or satisfac-
tion of the debt. It resembles more the gift of the
bond itself; but this it cannot be, for want of a deli-
very, which is essential to a gift. Without a delivery,
the transaction is a mere contract or agreement to give,
which, being without consideration, cannot be enforced.
If the person on whom the order was drawn, had deli-
vered the bond, in pursuance of the order, before it was
countermanded, the gift would have been complete.—

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Whitaker v. Whitaker.

But the owner, or his representative, might countermand it, which was done in the present case.

The only authority I have seen, which in any measure supports a gift without delivery, is taken from *Brooke's Abridg.* (*Trespass, pl.* 303) there it is said, if A, in London, the owner of goods which are in York, give them to B, and before B has obtained the actual possession, a stranger take them, B may maintain trespass for them. If this be law, it is on the ground, that the action is brought against a stranger, without any revocation on the part of the donor.

The executor, by resuming the actual possession, and bringing the present action, has clearly revoked the gift. (*Withers* v. *Lys*, 3 *Ser. Low.* 9.)

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Matthew Whitaker, adm'r of Levi H. McLean, v. Carey Whitaker, ex'r of William Taylor. } From Halifax.

A slave hired out, is a *chose* in the possession of the owner. Therefore, when the slave of a feme sole was, before her marriage, hired for a year, and the husband died during the term, the property does not survive to the wife, but vests in the personal representative of her husband.

DETINUE for a negro, and on the trial, the Jury found specially, the following facts. The slave in question was the property of *Elizabeth Whitaker*, and was by her hired out for the year 1825, she being of full age and unmarried. During the term, *Elizabeth* intermarried with the Defendant's testator, who died before its expiration. At the end of the year 1825, the slave came into the possession of the widow, the former owner, who agreed with the Defendant to pay hire for it, if in law it belonged to him. *Elizabeth*, the widow, was in posses-

sion of the slave under this agreement, until she intermarried with the Plaintiff's intestate, who continued it until his death, when the Defendant took the slave into his possession, claiming as executor of *Taylor*.

Upon this verdict, his honor Judge DANIEL gave judgment for the Plaintiff, and the Defendant appealed.

No Counsel appeared for either party in this Court.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The case depends upon the effect which a contract of hiring has upon the possession. If it divests the owner of the possession, and places it in the person hiring, the thing hired ceases to be a *chose* in possession, and becomes a *chose* in action, and therefore, does not pass absolutely, but *sub modo* only, from the wife to the husband, upon their intermarriage.

A contract of hiring, is not a sale of the thing for the period of hiring; the property remains as it did before —it is a contract for the use of the thing hired. The hirer is a mere bailee, or *locum tenens* for the owner, and only holds the property for him. The general property draws to it the possession, as long as the occupant, or qualified owner, retains the occupancy. At any rate, the possession of the hirer is not a possession for himself; for nothing is more common than the maxim, that the possession of the bailee, is that of the bailor, and hiring is a species of bailment. If the hirer possessed for himself, he could not possess for another, whose possession has continuance, and is exclusive of his. He is called the *qualified owner*, not to express his ownership, or that he has any part of the property, but for want of a proper term to express his interest in it.

I therefore think the owner's possession is not disturbed by the hiring; that the occupancy of the hirer is perfectly consistent with it, and therefore does not divest it; that the owner has such a possession, that he may either sell or give the property. Of course, in the pre-

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Dwyer v. Cutler.

sent case, the marriage was a complete gift of the slave in question, to the first husband. For an inability to give, sell or transfer, is the reason why the marriage is not a perfect gift of the wife's *choses* in action to the husband, they being incapable of a complete transfer—not for the reason generally given, that it is selling a right of going to law, and thereby stirring up lawsuits, but because such things are not *property*, and *property* only is the subject of transfer.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and judgment for the Defendant.

Thomas O. Dwyer
v.
Henry G. Cutler.
} From Hertford.

A single Magistrate has no jurisdiction of actions, founded upon a covenant of guaranty.

This action was originally commenced by a warrant, and was founded upon the following instrument:

"I have this day transferred to *Thomas O. Dwyer*, a note of *Arthur Lawrence* for ninety-five dollars, dated the 30th day of August last, and payable the 5th of September, 1826, which note I guarantee unto the said *Thomas O. Dwyer*, or his assigns, for value received. Witness my hand and seal, October 12, 1826.

"HENRY G. CUTLER."

On the trial, it was objected on the part of the Defendant, that a Justice of the Peace had no jurisdiction of the subject. The objection was overruled by his honor Judge MARTIN, and a verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, and judgment entered accordingly, the Defendent apdealed.

The case was submitted without argument by *Gaston*, for the Plaintiff. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

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Reid v. Kelly.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The act of 1820, extending the jurisdiction of Justices to one hundred dollars, does not embrace this case. The words are, "bonds, notes and liquidated accounts." There is a guaranty under seal, on which the sole remedy is by an action of covenant, in which damages would be recovered for the non-performance of the guaranty.

It was certainly not the design of the act, that Magistrates should have jurisdiction of a case, in which questions are likely to arise, which it would be difficult for them to settle. The construction of a guaranty, the extent of the obligation imposed by it, and the degree of diligence which, under the circumstances of the case, the Plaintiff is bound to use, require the consideration of a Jury, aided by a Court qualified to instruct them. There ought to be a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

Thomas M. D. Reid
v.
John B. Kelly.
} From Moore.

The records of the County Courts cannot be collaterally impeached in the Superior Courts. Therefore, evidence offered to prove that a judgment of the County Court, in another suit, was entered up in the vacation, without the order of the Court, is inadmissible.

Every Court has power to correct its records; and in this respect, the Superior Courts have an appellate jurisdiction to correct those of the County Courts.

This was a special action on the case, in which the Plaintiff declared, that he had brought an action of debt against one *Flora Martin*, in the County Court of Moore, "That the Defendant being an Attorney of that Court, "entered an appearance for the said *Flora*, and after "the final adjournment of the Court to which the writ "was returned, and without the leave or order of the "Court, did falsely enter, at the Clerk's office, in the

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Reid v. Kelly.

"record of the said action, between the Plaintiff and the "said *Flora*, a judgment of nonsuit, whereby, &c." The Defendant pleaded *Not Guilty*, and upon the issue made by that plea, the cause was tried, before RUFFIN Judge, on the last Fall Circuit.

The Plaintiff offered in evidence the record of the cause, between himself and *Flora Martin*, in the County Court, whereby it appeared, that the Defendant was the Attorney of *Flora*, and that a judgment of nonsuit was entered, because there was no appearance on behalf of the Plaintiff. The judgment, as the same was set forth in the record, was regularly entered by the Court, during the term. The Plaintiff offered to prove, that in fact the judgment was not entered by the Court; but that the entry thereof was made by the present Defendant, in the records of the County Court, after the adjournment of the Court, at the Clerk's office, when the rules were taken by the Attorneys. The Defendant objected to the admission of this testimony, because the County Court is the exclusive judge of the correctness of its own records, and is alone conusant of its rules of practice, in signing judgments of nonsuit, and taking other rules which are of course, and which are usually entered at the Clerk's office.

The presiding Judge acquiescing in the correctness of this reasoning, rejected the evidence. In submission to this opinion, the Plaintiff suffered a nonsuit, which the Judge refusing to set aside, he appealed.

W. H. Haywood, for the Plaintiff, submitted the cause without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HENDERSON, Judge.—I concur with the Judge, who tried this cause in the Court below, and for the reasons given by him.

The records of a Court, by which I understand the

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Pearson v. Nesbit.

memorial of the proceedings of a Court of Record, upon a matter within its jurisdiction, when offered in evidence, either in the same, or any other Court, cannot be impugned by counter evidence. The only question of fact to be examined into *dehors* itself, if any is, is the thing, offered as a record, a memorial of the judicial proceedings of the Court, as recognized by the Court itself? If it is, there is an end to further enquiry as to the facts it affirms; it is taken as verity itself. But this does not impeach the power of the Court, upon proper proceedings, instituted for that purpose, to examine into, and ascertain, how that, which appears regularly upon their memorial, came there; and if found to have been improperly placed there, to expunge it from their proceedings. This power however, is confined to the Court of which it purports to be a record. No other Court possesses it (unless acting in an appellate capacity)—not even the Supreme, over the most inferior Courts. (*Slocumb* v. *Anderson*, 1 *Law Repos.* 466. *Jones* v. *Zollicoffer*—*Austin* v. *Rodman*, 1 *Hawks*, 74. *Tuttle* v. *Gandy*, *ditto*, 282).

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Elizabeth Pearson
v.
Alexander Nesbit,
} From Rowan.

The same person cannot be both Plaintiff and Defendant in the same cause. Where two executors confessed a judgment to a copartnership, of which one of them was a member, it was held to be error in fact, and for it the judgment was reversed.

Richmond Pearson appointed the present Plaintiff, and *Jesse A Pearson*, executor and executrix of his will. At the time of his death, he was indebted to *Alexander Nesbit & Company*, which consisted of the present Defendant, and the same *Jesse A. Pearson*, whom he had appointed one of his executors.

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Pearson v. Nesbit.

A writ issued in the name of "*A. Nesbit & Co.*" Plaintiffs, against "*Jesse A. Pearson* and *Elizabeth Pearson*, executor and executrix of *Richmond Pearson*," Defendants, returnable to the Fall term of 1820, of Rowan Superior Court, when judgment was confessed thereon by the Defendants. Execution issued on this judgment, and was continued until the Spring term of 1823, when a return of *Nulla bona testatoris* was made. After the confession of the judgment (the case did not state when) *Jesse A. Pearson* died. A *scire facias* on the judgment issued at the instance of *Nesbit*, as surviving partner, to subject the present Plaintiff *de bonis propriis*.

At the Fall term of 1827, the present Plaintiff, one of the original Defendants, filed an affidavit, stating that *Jesse A. Pearson* was both Plaintiff and Defendant in the first action; that she never had received any of the assets of *Richmond Pearson*, and moved, 1st, for a writ of error *coram nobis*; and if the matter assigned was not error, then 2dly, to set aside the judgment confessed by her and *Jesse A. Pearson*. The defendant pleaded, 1st, *In nullo est erratum*. 2dly, that if there was error, it was waived by the confession of the judgment.

On the last Circuit, before his honor, Judge STRANGE, an order in the alternative was made, whereby the judgment was reversed for error, if error, *coram nobis*, was proper; but if not, then the judgment was vacated.—Upon which, *Nesbit* appealed.

Gaston, for the Plaintiff, submitted the case without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HENDERSON Judge.—A suit at law, is a contest between two parties in a Court of Justise; the one seeking, and the other withholding the thing in contest. The same individual cannot be, at the same time, both the person seeking and the person withholding. For it involves an absurdity, that a person should seek *from* him-

self, or withhold *from* himself. Between a corporation and the individuals composing it, this identity does not exist, and the absurdity above stated is avoided; but where the same person is both Plaintiff and Defendant, in different rights, as for himself on the one side, and as executor on the other, this absurdity is involved. When adversary rights, as creditor and executor, or debtor and executor, meet in the same individual, the law considers the contest as settled—at least as long as the union exists. As soon therefore, as it appears to the Court, that the same individual is both Plaintiff and Defendant, any judgment entered up in the cause is, to say the least, erroneous, and should be reversed.

I am not prepared to say, whether a writ of error, or a motion to vacate, is the most proper mode of proceeding in this case; but I am satisfied, that a writ of error is a proper remedy, although it may not be the only proper one.

The judgment of the Superior Court, reversing the original judgment, must be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment of reversal affirmed.

Frederick Stevelie, adm'r. of Lewis Ferrill, *v.* James Greenlee, } From Burke.

Where an administrator takes the book-debt oath, and swears that the original entry is in the handwriting of a person who has not, after diligent enquiry, been heard of for seven years, and that he knows of no one who can prove his handwriting, the account was held to be sufficiently proved.

ASSUMPSIT, commenced originally by warrant in September, 1808, and tried on the last Fall Circuit, before NORWOOD, Judge.

On the trial, the Plaintiff produced the books of his

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Stevelie v. Greenlee.

intestate, and swore that he verily believed the account charged therein was just; that there were no witnesses within his knowledge who could prove the items charged —that he found the books in the same condition in which they were then exhibited, and that he knew of no credits due the Defendant. It appeared, on his examination, that the book was not in the handwriting of the intestate but in that of two other persons. The Plaintiff swore that he had made diligent enquiry for those persons, and had not heard of them for the last seven years, and that he knew of no person who could prove their handwriting.

His Honor instructed the Jury, that if they believed the evidence, the account was sufficiently proved, and the Plaintiff entitled to a verdict. The Jury found according to the charge, and the Defendant appealed.

No Counsel appeared on either side in this Court.

HALL, Judge.—The book-debt law does not require, that the articles charged in the books of executors or administrators should be in their own handwriting. The administrator took the oath which the law required. He gave the best evidence which the nature of the case admitted of. It was a question altogether for the Jury to decide on, and they have done so. The rule for a new trial should be discharged.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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Alpha P. Moore
v.
James M'Nairy, exr. of Lucy Peebles, } From Guilford.

In Assumpsit, matter which arises after plea pleaded, may be given in evidence under the General Issue, in mitigation of damages; and where, if plead, it would bar the action, the Plaintiff is only entitled to nominal damages.

ASSUMPSIT for work and labour done, commenced in the lifetime of the testatrix, and upon her death, the Defendant was made a party. On the trial, the will of *Lucy Peebles* was offered in evidence by the Defendant, who contended that a bequest therein was accepted by the Plaintiff in satisfaction of the claim.

There was no plea of this satisfaction, *Puis darrein continuance*. Neither was the reading of the will objected to by the Plaintiff.

After a verdict for the Defendant, the Plaintiff moved for a new trial, because the will had been improperly read to the Jury. STRANGE, Judge, who presided, discharged the rule, and the Plaintiff appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

The *Attorney General & Devereux*, for the Defendant, waiving the ground that the Plaintiff had not objected to the reading of the will, contended, that in this form of action, every thing which goes in mitigation of damages, is admissible—but when relied upon solely, it never is suffered to form a complete bar to the damages, if it accrues after the action is brought, unless plead since the last continuance. For this they cited *Buller's N. P.* 158. 2 *Lev.* 81, *Holland* v. *Jourdine* (3 *Ser. & Low.* 5.)

HENDERSON Judge.—As it does not appear upon the record, whether the Jury found, that the Defendant's

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Moore v. M'Nairy.

testator did not promise, or that she had promised, and satisfied the demand by the legacy, we must necessarily examine if the evidence of satisfaction was properly received. There can be no doubt, that the evidence of the legacy, if objected to, was improperly received. As a bar, or as a full defence, it should have been pleaded, since the last continuance. But without such a plea, it was proper to lessen the damages; and if in full of the demand, the Plaintiff would have been entitled to nominal damages, only as upon a default. (*Holland* v. *Jourdine*, 3 *Ser. & Low.* 5.) Indeed it is the general doctrine, that in *assumpsit*, payment or satisfaction, since plea pleaded, may be given in evidence, under the general issue, in mitigation of damages, without resorting to a plea since the last continuance, which if sustained, bars the action entirely. Should we grant a new trial, it would be only because the Plaintiff got nothing, when he was entitled to one cent; and that too, not upon the merits, but from a mere omission in pleading. The Defendant did not neglect to plead since the last continuance from design; for since our act declaring that plea to be no waiver of those originally entered, he could have no motive in this design.

But there is another ground, upon which there can be no doubt. The objection, if made, was upon a mere matter of form. It was not made, until after as full a trial was had, as if that form had been complied with. Had the Plaintiff succeeded, the trial would have availed him, as much as if the necessary forms had been observed. After having one fair chance, by his own consent, he now wishes for another. If he were indulged, it would be too strong an inducement for parties to hold back; and if unsuccessful, take another chance. I wish to be understood, not to refuse the new trial, because *justice has been done*, that is, justice *in violation of the law*, but for the reasons in law, above mentioned

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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Den ex dem. of Winston J. McRee et. al. v. Fen & Phineas Alexander. } From Mecklenburg.

The saving clause of the Act of 1715, c. 2, preserves the right of one of several co-heirs who is within the proviso, although the other co-heirs are under no disability, and although they are barred.—Therefore in ejectment by three co-heirs, upon a joint demise, two of whom were free from disability, but the other under coverture, judgment may be rendered against the Plaintiff upon the titles of those under no disability, and in his favor upon the title of the *feme covert*.

EJECTMENT on the joint demise of *Winston J. McRee, David M. McRee, Isaac S. Henderson* and *Lucinda* his wife, and on the trial before STRANGE, Judge, the jury returned the following facts specially; that *Winston J. McRee, David M. McRee* and *Lucinda Henderson*, were the heirs at law of *David McRee*, who died intestate, seised of the premises in the declaration mentioned; that the lessors of the Plaintiff were tenants in common of the land, and that no partition thereof ever had been made; that the Defendant obtained a grant for the same land, ousted the lessors of the Plaintiff, and kept possession for more than seven years before the commencement of the present action—that at the time of the ouster, *Winston* and *David M. McRee*, were under no disability, but that *Lucinda Henderson* was, and still is covert of *Isaac S. Henderson*, one of the lessors of the Plaintiff. Upon this verdict, his honor gave judgment for the Defendant, from which the lessors of the Plaintiff appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by *Wilson*, for the lessors of the Plaintiff. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—The lessors of the Plaintiff are tenants in common, claiming as heirs to *McRee*. Two of them were under no disability when their right of en-

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try accrued—one was under the twofold disability of infancy and coverture. More than seven years have elapsed since the right of entry accrued, and the question open on this record is, Whether the right of entry of all, or any of them, is taken away by the act of 1715, c. 2. By the 3d section of that act, it is incumbent on the lessors of the Plaintiff to show, that they had a right of entry when the action was brought. No person or persons shall enter or make claim, but within seven years next after his, her or their right or title descend or accrue; and in default thereof, such person so not entering, or making default, shall be utterly excluded or disabled from any entry or claim thereafter to be made, 3d section. The 4th section provides, that if any person or persons that is, or hereafter shall be, entitled to any right or claim of lands, tenements or hereditaments, shall be, at the time the said right or title first descended, accrued, come or fallen, within the age of twenty one years, *feme covert*, &c. that then such person or persons shall and may, notwithstanding the said seven years be expired, commence his, her or their suit, make his, her or their entry, as he, she or they might have done before this act, so as such person or persons shall, within three years next after full age, discoverture, &c. Each individual lessor might in this case have brought an ejectment to recover his own share, without the necessity of joining the other who was under disability; for as tenants in common, they hold by several titles, or by one title and several rights; and so strictly was this notion acted on, that until a late decision in this Court, it was held, that tenants in common could not make a joint demise. But as the lease is a mere fiction, and the action liberally construed, so that the possession which is recovered enures to each lessor according to his title, such effect should be given to the demise as the law warrants, otherwise the substance will be sacrificed to the form.

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M'Ree et al. v. Alexander.

Even in the case of coparceners, who constitute but one heir, one may on her sole demise recover her own share; and so of the sole dsmise of a joint tenant, to the Plaintiff in Ejectment, for that severs the joint tenancy, and entitles to a recovery for the lessor's proportion. (*Den ex dem. of Bowyer* v. *Judge*, 11 *East.* 287.) So where an estate descended to two coparceners, one of whom was under a disability, and the other did not enter within the period prescribed by the statute, no doubt was suggested of the right of the one who was under disability, to recover. The only doubt was, whether the disability of one, did not preserve the right of the other. There were in that case, it is true, two counts, one upon a joint demise by the two coparceners, the other upon the sole demise of the one under disability, upon which latter one the judgment was entered up; but that was a mere form unconnected with the justice of the case. (*Langdon* v. *Rowlston*, 2 *Taunt.* 441.)

As the only plea in this case is the general issue, it is incumbent on the claimants in the first instance, to establish their right to the possession; whatever operates as a bar to that right, must apply distributively to each; and judgment rendered for those whose rights are preserved.

The construction of the 9th section of the same act, bars the remedy of all the Plaintiffs who necessairly join in the action, although some are under disability; for it is competent for those who are under no disability, as well as their duty, to take care of the rights of those who were unable to protect themselves; and for the other reason stated by the Court in *Reden* v. *Frion*, (3 *Murph.* 577,) that the grammatical construction of the words enforced such construction, since the words "person or persons" in the proviso, meant where there is a single Plaintiff, he must be under a disability, in order to come within the exception; or where there are several Plain-

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M'Ree et al. v. Alexander.

tiffs, they must all be under disability. For these reasons, I think judgment should be entered up for one-third part of the land, the share of the *feme covert*.

HENDERSON, Judge.—In a joint action brought by several, where the Defendant avails himself of the bar given to such action, by the statute of limitations, all the Plaintiffs must bring themselves within some of the savings of the statute, otherwise the bar is not avoided, (*Reden* v. *Frion*, 3 *Mur.* 577.) The decisions on this point are uniform, as far as I know, and I shall not now enquire whether they are founded on the technical reason, that the action being joint, all or none of the Plaintiffs, must recover, otherwise the judgment does not pursue the writ and declaration, or whether on the very words of the statute. But I must say that the result is disgraceful to our system of jurisprudence, as it sacrifices the spirit of the proviso either to technical absurdity, or to literal construction. But neither of these reasons can be brought to bear in this case. The action of ejectment *eo nomine*, is not within the statute of limitations. It is true, that the statute bars an entry, and that this action cannot be brought but by one who has the right of entry. The law however, does not require a joint entry to be made; each may enter according to his estate or right. Where many have a joint right of entry, and one enters, his entry enures for the benefit of all; if there is a joint title, and some have lost, and some have not lost their right of entry, he who enters does it for the benefit of those whose entry is congeable. It follows, that if all have lost the right of entry but the one who enters, he enters solely for his own benefit, and becomes tenant in common with those who have acquired an estate in the land, by possession or otherwise. But if after his entry, those who have lost their right of entry, recover their estates in a higher action, he becomes joint tenant, a coparcener, or tenant in common with them, according to the nature of their estates.

In this case, there is nothing in the statute, which prevents the *feme covert*, one of the lessors of the Plaintiff, from entering; and if her brothers her coheirs, had not lost their right of entry, she entered for their benefit also, and they became by our law, tenants in common. If they had lost their right of entry, she entered for her own benefit, and became tenant in common with the Defendant, who had acquired an estate by possession, for tenants in common may hold their estates by different titles. The one may be wrongful, and liable to be defeated, the other rightful, and indefeasible.

But if the Plaintiff is driven from all other grounds, there is one on which she may rest her case. This action is not brought by several Plaintiffs; it is brought by *John Den* the lessee. He derives title, it is true, from three; but *they* are not the *Plaintiffs*, and if his lease from *them*, or *any* of them, is good, it is sufficient. If there was a real lease, and the lessee had been evicted, and had brought his ejectment, which is the appropriate remedy for the eviction of a termor, it would be no objection to his title that he claimed from three different persons. If the title of one of them was good for the whole, he would recover the whole. If the title of one was good for a part, and that of the others bad for the whole, he would recover that part. The lessor of the Plaintiff does not lose by the fiction of the lease; and the question on the trial is, could the lessors, or any of them, make a valid lease; that is, had they, or any of them, a right of entry to the whole or to any part; and if to a part, what part. In the case of a real lease, the lessee might set up a title under any number of different lessors, from whom he actually claimed the estate, however adverse their claims might be. But in the case of a fictitious lease, as that is proceeding by leave, and under the sanction of the Court, demises from many persons, claiming differently, would not be permitted, because it would make the case too complicated for fair and easy investigation. But in

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a real lease, where the party actually sets up title from many different persons, however complicated and various their titles may be, I do not perceive how the Court could interfere and confine him to any one or more of those titles; he must be permitted, if he can, to show it from any source.

I therefore think that the Judge erred, in saying that there should be judgment for the Defendant, and that all the lessors of the Plaintiff were barred of an entry, unless all were within some of the savings of the statute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

James Y. Jones
-v.
John Dunn,
} From Wake.

A Sheriff is not bound to take notice that the Defendant in a *ca. sa.* is not entitled to the benefit of the act of 1822; and where, without actual notice, that the contract on which the action was brought, was made before the 1st of May, 1823, on executing a *ca. sa.* he took bond pursuant to that act, it was held not to be an escape.

DEBT FOR AN ESCAPE, in which the following case agreed was made up by the Counsel.

The Plaintiff was a resident of Virginia, and there in September, 1823, obtained a judgment against one *Delony*, for his debt, with interest from the 10th of April, 1821. Upon this judgment, suit was brought against *Delony* in the County Court of Wake, and at August Term 1825, judgment was obtained, and a *ca. sa.* issued, which came to the hands of a Deputy of the Defendant on the 31st of July, 1826; *Delony* was arrested on this *ca. sa.* and thereupon gave bond, for his appearance at the next term of the County Court, pursuant to the act of 1822, when the Defendant by his Deputy, permitted him to go at large. At the time of the arrest and discharge of *Delony*, neither the Sheriff nor his Deputy had

actual notice of the facts above stated, except so far as they were recited in the execution, which commanded the Sheriff "to take the body &c. to satisfy and pay the sum of &c. with interest from the 16th of August, 1825." The Attorney of the Plaintiff, whose name was indorsed on the execution, resided in the City of Raleigh, at the time of the arrest, and was so known to reside both to the Sheriff and his Deputy, neither of whom applied to him for instruction.

Upon this case, his Honor Judge DANIEL, gave judgment for the Defendant, from which the Plaintiff appealed.

W. H. Haywood, for the Plaintiff, insisted,

1st. That the Sheriff ought to have held the Defendant in the execution, in custody, until he had actual notice from the Plaintiff, of the time when the debt was contracted.

2d. That the execution itself recited facts, which amounted to actual notice to the Sheriff.

3d. That the Sheriff should have presumed against the Defendant in the execution, and required of him proof of the time when the debt was contracted.

4th. That at all events, it was the duty of the Sheriff to enquire of the Plaintiff's Attorney, before he let the Defendant in the execution, go at large.

Badger, contra.

HALL, Judge.—The proceeding upon which this action is founded, cannot be charged to the bad intention of any one, and if a loss has happened, it must be borne by that party who has been the most negligent.

When the execution came to the hands of the Sheriff, he proceeded under the provisions of the act of 1822, made for the benefit of insolvent debtors, which directs the Sheriff upon executing a *ca. sa.* to take bond and security for the appearance of the Defendant, at the Court

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from which the writ issues, instead of committing him to jail. By a proviso contained in the act, its operation is restricted to executions on judgments, which are obtained on contracts made since the 1st of May, 1823.—The Sheriff was ignorant whether the contract on which the judgment in this case was obtained, came within the proviso or not. Until the receipt of the execution, he was a stranger to the suit, and there is no reason to believe that he was in any way conusant of the judgment. The law does not require that he should be, but this is not the case with the Plaintiff. He was a party to the contract, the judgment and the execution; the latter issued for his benefit. It was therefore completely in his power, to notify the Sheriff of the course he was to pursue. As he has omitted to do this, the Sheriff ought not to be subjected to the payment of his claim, against the Defendant in the execution. In many cases the entry of the judgment does not show when the contract on which the action is founded, was made; and in such a case, the most vigilant Sheriff could get no information from its examination. On the other hand, if the Plaintiff wishes to derive a benefit from the proviso in the statute, the fact that his case is within it, can easily be entered on the record, and made known to the Sheriff. When Sheriffs depart from their duty wantonly, and from improper motives, as they have much in their power, they should be rigorously dealt with; but when they act honestly, and with a view to the faithful discharge of their duties, they should be protected, so far as the rules of law will permit. I cannot bring myself to think that the Defendant should be subjected to the Plaintiff's demand in this case.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—That the laws of the State where a contract was made, shall be resorted to for its exposition, but the laws of the country where a remedy is sought, shall be applied to it when it is enforced, seems

to be a principle well established in England, and has been frequently recognized in the Courts of the United States. The form of action, the process, and the time within which it may be commenced, must necessarily be gathered from the law of the State, where the suit is brought. Thus where a bond is given in another State, where it is assignable, and a suit is brought in England, it must be in the name of the obligee, because there it is not assignable by law, (*Folliot* v. *Ogden*, 1 *H. Bl.* 135). So where a contract was made abroad, and sued on in England, the statute of limitations of that country was allowed to be pleaded, (2 *Ves.* 340) ; and this rule has been adopted and followed in various State Courts, (2 *Mass.* 90—*Nash* v. *Tupper*, 1 *Cain's Rep.* 402—*Ruggles* v. *Keeler*, 3 *Johns.* 263). So that if there were before us, evidence, that when this contract was entered into, the laws of Virginia gave the creditor a right to imprison his debtor on a *ca. sa.* and that he made his engagement with him on the faith and expectation of a power to take his body, I should still think, that when he sues in our forum, the only enquiry is, does the law of this State give him the same right. There is a case in one of the British reporters in conflict with this principle, but the decision was not unanimous, and the authority of it has since been questioned. The case was, where a Defendant entered into an instrument in France, by which his property only, and not his person, was liable according to the law of France ; the Court discharged him on a common appearance, (*Melan* v. *Duke of Fitz-James*, 1 *Bos. & Pul.* 138) ; but see 2 *East.* 455—2 *Johns.* 158. If that decision is correct, it would follow from it, that if the Defendant had been amenable in his body by the law of France, though not so by the law of England, he must have been held to special bail, or have gone to prison.

This brings me to the act of 1822, for the relief of debtors, upon the true construction of which this case depends ; and considering that the question now first ari-

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ses, I think we ought so to construe it, as not to make Sheriffs liable for acts of inadvertence, which they could not readily guard against, and where there was no record or process in their possession, to apprize them that the Defendant was not entitled to the benefit of the act. The act extends the benefit to every debtor taken upon a *ca. sa.* for any debt contracted after the 1st of May, 1823. The only information the Sheriff could derive from the writ of execution in this case was, that it issued June 17, 1826, about three years after the time when contracts entered into, were privileged by the act; that the recovery was of a debt, but whether founded on a judgment or not, the execution does not disclose. It does then appear to me reasonable, that if presumption was to be made either way, it should be in favor of the Defendant, since the Sheriff could not be ignorant that from the despatch with which business was done in that Court, there had been ample time to contract a debt since May 1823, and to obtain judgment and execution for the non-payment. The execution too, shows that it was executed by the Deputy, who may have lived in the country, and in the neighborhood of the Defendant. The consequence of keeping him in custody, until the Deputy came to town to ascertain when the debt was contracted, would, in a case where the debt was contracted since May, 1823, and the bond was tendered, have made the Sheriff liable to an action of false imprisonment. That consequence to be sure, would not have resulted in this case, but the rule if established, must be general in its application. I therefore think it would be a severe rule to impose upon the Sheriff the duty of ascertaining the time when a debt was contracted, considering how easy it is for the Plaintiff to have it indorsed on the execution, or to give notice to the Sheriff; and the case reminds me of the excellent remark of *Lord Coke*, "and forasmuch as escapes are so penal to Sheriffs, the Judges of

the law have always made such favorable construction, as the law will suffer in favor of Sheriffs; and to the intent that every one bear his own burthen, the Judges shall never adjudge one to make an escape by a strict construction." (*Boyton's case*, 3 *Rep.* 44). I think the judgment should be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Josiah Turner
v.
Samuel Child,
} From Orange.

Where an agent appointed one under him to sell the goods, and collect the debts of his principal, and upon the death of the latter, notifies his substitute that the agency was at an end, if the substitute acts in the agency after such notice, he becomes *executor de son tort*. An *executor de son tort* cannot retain for his own debt.

After the new trial had in this cause at a former term of this Court, (*ante* 25) it came on again before his Honor Judge STRANGE, on the last Circuit, when it appeared that there was no rightful personal representative of *Francis Child*, and that the Defendant had intermeddled with his effects under the following circumstances: *Francis Child* had appointed one *Clancy* his agent, who authorised the Defendant to sell on a credit, the property of *Francis*, for the purpose of paying debts due to the Defendant, and those for which he was responsible. Before the expiration of the credit given at the sale, *Francis Child* died in the State of Tennessee; upon learning this, *Clancy* refused to interfere with the property, and notified the defendant of his determination, who disregarding it, collected notes taken at the sale, to an amount larger than the sum due him, or that for which he was responsible.

The Defendant offered to prove that *Francis Child* carried to the State of Tennessee several horses, which were

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before his departure, the property of the Defendant.—But his Honor thinking the testimony irrelevant, rejected it.

A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, and a rule for a new trial discharged, the Defendant appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by *Badger* for the Plaintiff, and by the *Attorney General and Devereux*, for the Defendant.

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—The case is somewhat different in its circumstances, from what it was when before appealed from, for it now appears that there was no rightful administrator on the effects of *Francis Child*. It follows thence, that if the Defendant has done any act which makes him liable as executor *de son tort*, the Plaintiff having established his debt, is entitled to recover. Another feature in the case now is, that *Clancy* was appointed the Attorney in fact of *Francis*, and that the Defendant's authority was derived under this agency.—Supposing therefore, that the Attorney was authorized to collect the money arising from the sale after the death of his principal, yet *Clancy* renounced the authority after hearing of the death of *F. Child*, and gave notice to the Defendant, that he had done so; but after this, when the Defendant was without a shadow of authority, he collected money belonging to the estate. This makes him an executor *de son tort*, and the remaining question is, whether the evidence of *F. Child*, having taken away horses belonging to the Defendant, was properly rejected. I think it was in no manner connected with the fact, which made the Defendant executor *de son tort*, viz: the taking into his possession the goods of his brother, and collecting his debts; and because if the Defendant meant to rely upon it, as authorizing him to retain, it was inadmissible. Such an executor cannot retain for his own debt, otherwise there would be a struggle among creditors to obtain possession of the goods, without obtain-

ing administration. If he pleads a retainer to satisfy his own debt, the Plaintiff may reply that he is executor *de son tort*, (*Alexander* v. *Lane*, *Velv.* 137). Nor can he defend himself by showing, that he has paid debts of the deceased to the amount of what he has received, unless he pleads *plene administravit*, (*Whitehall* v. *Squire*, *Carthew* 104). I am of opinion that the case has been properly decided, and that the judgment be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Tully Bell et al.
v.
Joseph Dozier et ux. } From Currituck.

In the descent of acquired estates, the only qualification necessary to a collateral, is, that he be the nearest relation of the person last seised. In descended estates, he must be of the blood of the first purchaser.

Where an estate was purchased by the father, and descended from him, and the Propositus left a mother, a maternal half-brother, paternal uncles of the half-blood, and other more distant paternal collaterals: It was held, that the proviso in the 6th canon of descents, (*act of* 1808) applies to cases where a surviving brother or sister cannot inherit, as well as to cases where none are left, and therefore that a life estate in the lands descended to the mother, and the fee to the paternal uncles of the half-blood.

This was an action of WASTE, tried before NASH Judge, at the Spring term, 1826, of the Court below, when a verdict was taken and damages assessed for the Plaintiffs, subject to the opinion of the Court as to the right of the Plaintiffs to sustain the action, upon the following case. In 1812, *Peter Barnard* died intestate, seised of the lands on which the waste was committed, leaving two children, *Elizabeth* and *Jesse*, and a widow; and afterwards in the same year, *Elizabeth* died intestate, and without issue. The widow had dower assigned her in this land, and in 1813, intermarried with the De-

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fendant *Joseph Dozier*, by whom, in the succeeding year, she had issue which is still alive; and afterwards, *Jesse Barnard* died intestate and without issue. The lands were purchased by *Peter Barnard*, and the Plaintiffs are his maternal half-brother and sisters and nearest of blood to him; but he had also collateral relations, the descendants of his father's nephews and nieces.

The presiding Judge being of opinion, for the Plaintiffs, gave them judgment for treble the damages assessed by the Jury, and the Defendants appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by *Gaston*, for the Plaintiff, and by *Hogg*, for the Defendant.

HENDERSON, Judge.—*Peter Barnard*, the first purchaser of the lands in question, died seised thereof in the year 1812, intestate, leaving two children, *Elizabeth* and *Jesse*, and a widow, the mother of *Jesse*, I presume, although it is not so stated in the case. The *locus in quo* was assigned to the widow, as her dower. *Elizabeth* died intestate, without issue, in the same year. In the year 1813, the widow married *Dozier*, one of the Defendants; and in 1814, had a child, which is still alive. The Plaintiffs are the *maternal* half-brothers and sisters of *Peter Barnard*, and the nearest of kin to *Jesse*, except the child before mentioned. *Peter Barnard*'s father left nephews and neices, whose descendants are still alive.

The question presented is, on whom did the inheritance descend, upon the death of *Jesse*?

The second canon of descents, is the act upon the subject, passed in the year 1808, calls the females equally with the males, to the succession. It thereby abolishes the priority of the male over the female line, and places them upon a perfect equality, both as to collateral and lineal descents. The express declaration, whether of the paternal or maternal line, to be found at the close of the fifth canon, was therefore unnecessary. Its omission in

the fourth canon, under which this case falls, will not prejudice the maternal line. The only qualification required is, that it be of the blood of the first purchaser. I also think, that the provision made in the sixth canon, declaring that the collateral relations of the half-blood shall inherit, equally with the whole blood, was also unnecessary, it being an entire enactment upon the subject, and the previous provisions embracing them; the only qualifications required being, that in the case of an estate which has descended, such collateral relations should be of the blood of the first purchaser: for we shall presently see, that the words "*such ancestor*," in the close of the fourth canon, must be stricken out, and in lieu thereof, the words "*first purchaser*," inserted. As we had been so long in the habit of considering the paternal line as preferable to the maternal, and the half-blood as entirely excluded, it was perhaps safer, expressly to declare it. This argument is made, that no objection should be taken to calling in the maternal line, under the fourth canon, under which this case falls, because the maternal line is not, in that section, placed upon an equality with the paternal, as it is in the fifth, which provides for newly acquired inheritances. The only qualification therefore, required by our law, in case of a collateral descent, is, that the claimant be the nearest collateral relation; and in case of a descended estate, that he be of the blood of the first purchaser; the preference of the male over the female line, and the whole over the half-blood, being entirely abolished. I have said, that the words "*such ancestor*," in the fourth canon, must be stricken out, and the words "*first purchaser*," inserted in lieu of them. If those words are retained, had this land descended to *Peter Barnard* from his father, and from *Peter* to *Jesse*, they would call to the succession *Peter's* maternal half-brothers and sisters, before the brothers and sisters of his father, for they are of the blood of *Peter*, and the *inheritance descended from*

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him to Jesse. Yet the same principle which excludes this child, before mentioned, (*Jesse's* half-blood on the mother's side) in favor of *Peter's* brothers and sisters, in such case, would exclude *Peter's* half-brothers and sisters on the mother's side (the present Plaintiffs) in favor of the nephews and nieces of *Peter's* father, the first purchaser of the inheritance.

The case does not expressly state, that *Jesse* was ever actually seised; but I think it may be inferred from the assignment of dower—for it is taken out of his seisin. But if it did not, the first canon of the act, speaking of lineal descents, declares that a seisin in law, shall make a *Propositus;* and although no such declaration is made in case of collateral descents, but the word *seised* only is used, I apprehend that the Legislature intended to make a legal seisin sufficient in both cases. No reason can be given why if it is good in the one case, it is not so in the other.

Upon the death of *Jesse* without issue, the lands in question devolved on his mother for life, although he left a brother or a sister. For the words "*capable of inheriting the estate,*" must be added to the following words in the sixth canon: "that in all cases, where the person last seised shall have left no issue, nor brother, nor sister, nor the issue of such;" for why postpone the mother, where the brother or sister cannot take? It is certainly the same as if there were none; for her claims are postponed to *theirs.* When they have no *claims,* it is the same as if *they* did not exist.

It is unnecessary to say what became of the dower, when a life-estate devolved on her in the whole land; for she remained a tenant for life, and liable to the action of waste.

I am of opinion, that the inheritance, subject to the life-estate in the mother, descended to the Plaintiffs, upon the death of *Jesse;* and that the judgment should be affirmed.———Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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John Weaver
v.
George Cryer & Samuel Moore } From Hertford.

Erroneous process is a justification to the officer who executes it, but not to the person who sues it out.

An execution which issues on a judgment more than a year and a day old, is erroneous only.

Where the Officer and the Plaintiff in an erroneous *fi. fa.* are jointly sued in trover, for property sold under it, the former may show his justification under the general issue, although it be jointly pleaded. If however, they had joined in pleading the justification specially, the plea would be bad as to both.

General reputation and cohabitation are evidence of a marriage, in all cases except action for *crim. con.*

TROVER FOR CATTLE, in which the usual memorandum of "not guilty," was entered on the Clerk's docket. On the trial before MARTIN Judge, on the last Circuit, it was proved by the Plaintiff, that the cattle in dispute were levied on as the property of *Bridget Weaver*, by the Defendant *Moore*, who was a Constable, and bought by the Defendant *Cryer*, and that *Bridget Weaver* had before the levy, sold them to the Plaintiff. At the sale, a woman who lived with the Plaintiff, claimed the cattle by a gift from *Bridget Weaver*; the Plaintiff was present when this claim was made, and said nothing. The Plaintiff also proved, that it was generally reputed, that the woman who lived with him, was his wife. It appeared that he was a mulatto, and that the woman was white.

The Defendants offered in evidence a judgment in favor of the Defendant *Cryer*, against *Bridget Weaver*, rendered by a Justice of the Peace on the 7th of June, 1823, and a writ of *fieri facias* thereon, written on the same paper, directed to the Defendant *Moore*, and dated the 30th of August, 1824, which was returned levied on the cattle in dispute. His honor rejected the evidence, thinking

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that an officer could not justify under process which issued on a judgment more than a year and a day old.

The Counsel for the Defendant requested the Judge to instruct the Jury, that common reputation was not evidence of a marriage between a mulatto and a white woman, as the policy of the country forbade such connexions. His Honor declined giving this instruction, but informed the Jury, that they were at liberty from reputation and cohabitation to infer a marriage.

A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Plaintiff, submitted the case without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The Judge erred, I think, in rejecting the evidence of the execution, as regarded the Constable, for although issued upon a dormant judgment, yet it is a justification to the officer, who acted in obedience to it. Nor does it vary the case that the execution is on the same paper with the judgment, from which fact, on a bare inspection, he could discover that the judgment had been granted more than a year and a day before the execution issued; for *non constat* that there had not been an intermediate execution. Of these things, the officer is not presumed to be a judge, his office being merely ministerial, and the issuing an execution, or rather the order to issue it, a judicial act, confided to another. But as to the Plaintiff in the judgment, the execution is no protection to him. He acted as a wrong doer in suing it out, and is liable for the acts of the officer who acted under it, the maxim being *qui facit per alium, facit per se*. Were this an action, where such a defence could not be made under the general issue, but the party bound to plead it specially as a justification, I should feel some difficulty on the subject, for it is most certain upon authority, that if *two* or more *join* in a plea

of justification, if it be bad for one, it is bad for all. I cannot however, consider the short memorandum made upon the Clerk's docket, as any thing but a mere intimation of the ground of defence, which the adverse party by not refusing, receives in lieu of a formal plea; but if drawn out at length, which the Plaintiff may cause to be done if he wishes, the matter is to be set forth formally. If by law, therefore, the justification may be good for one, and not for the other, as it is in this case, the memorandum will be understood, as a memorandum of a several plea. We are relieved however, from decisively determining this question, as in this action, the justification may be given in evidence under the general issue; which is, in its nature a several defence, or rather, in joint actions, a several denial of the acts imputed to the Defendants.

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As we cannot grant a new trial to the officer, without granting it to the other Defendant; that is, if it be granted as to one, it must be granted as to both——let the judgment be reversed, and a new trial granted generally.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It may be collected from the record, that this appeal was brought up to ascertain, whether the opinion delivered by the Judge was correct. The opinion affirms two propositions; the one is, that a Constable cannot justify under process, when the judgment on which the execution issued is dormant. The other is, that a marriage between a mulatto and a white woman, may be proved by common reputation. This appears to be the controversy, from the case made by the Judge, though the record itself places the sale in 1820, three years before the judgment, and more than five before the execution. I conclude therefore, that this statement is a manifest mistake.

This being an action of *trover*, there was no necessity to plead the justification, for the facts relied upon to

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constitute it, might have been given in evidence under the general issue. Nor indeed, is it regular, in this action, to plead a justification, unless it admit the property to be in the Plaintiff, and the conversion, but justifies the latter. (*Comyn's Digest, Pleader, E* 14).

It is therefore most fair, to deduce the law from the fact of this case, rather than to decide on a question of pleading; for there the rule is, that if two Defendants join in a plea, which is good as to one, but not as to the other, the plea is bad as to both—for when they put themselves on the same terms, the Court cannot sever the plea, and say that one is guilty, and the other is not. Thus, if an officer plead separately under a writ of *fi. fa.* or other process, he need not state the judgment; but if he join in the plea with the Plaintiff in the former action, and the judgment is not stated, the plea will be bad as to both Defendants; unless the Plaintiff in the former suit justify in aid of the officer. *Barker* v. *Braham*, 3 *Wils.* 376).

With regard to the first question, I take the law to be settled, that an officer is bound to execute all precepts that are directed to him from a competent jurisdiction; and inasmuch as he may justify under an erroneous process, he is not at liberty to disobey it. The distinction is between void and voidable process—the latter, in all cases, affording protection to the officer. Thus, if a *ca. sa.* is taken out after a year, and the Defendant thereupon arrested, and afterwards suffered to escape, debt lies against the officer, though the process was erroneously awarded; for it was sufficient to arrest him, and the Sheriff may justify in an action of false imprisonment, and therefore cannot let him at large. (*Bushe's case, Cro. E.* 188. *Sherly* v. *Wright, Ld. Ray.* 775).—But with respect to the Plaintiff in the judgment, as he sued out the execution irregularly, he cannot derive a title under the sale so effected—though the exception

could not be taken to it if a stranger had become the purchaser.

On the question of Evidence, I apprehend that the law was correctly stated—that general reputation and cohabitation, are evidence of a marriage; it is so in all cases, except in actions for *crim. con.*

There ought to be a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

John Peebles
v.
James Gee, } From Halifax.

Payments made on account of a debt, are first to be applied to the interest which has accrued thereon; and this is the rule in cases where it is given by positive enactment, as well as where it is allowed by the Jury, in their discretion.

ASSUMPSIT for work and labour as an overseer. On the trial, the Plaintiff proved his services as an overseer for eight years. The Defendant introduced an account in the handwriting of the Plaintiff, and endorsed by him, "settlement between *James Gee* and *John Peebles*." This account after showing the time of the Plaintiff's service, and the terms per annum, together with sundry payments made by the Defendant, exhibited a balance exclusive of interest, of $740, 62 due the Plaintiff. The Defendant then proved payments to the amount of that balance.

His Honor Judge DANIEL instructed the Jury, that where partial payments were made upon bonds, bills, notes or signed accounts, such payments are to be applied first to the interest; and after its discharge, then, to the extinguishment of the principal; because, in these cases, the interest being given by law, the creditor has the same right to demand it, as to demand the principal; and therefore, when payments a made, without any direction from the debtor as to their appli-

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cation, the creditor may apply it as he pleases—and that hence, such payments are always applied to that debt, which does not bear interest. But that the present claim, not being one on which the law allowed interest as a debt, the Plaintiff had no right to demand it, although Juries might, and usually did give it. But that the payments made, were to be applied to the principal, because that was the only debt existing at the time they were made; and that this application being made, in the present case, by the law, they were not at liberty to apply them otherwise—and that, if they found the whole principal to be paid, their verdict ought to be for the Defendant.

A verdict being returned according to the charge of the Judge, the Plaintiff appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff in this Court. *Badger*, for the Defendant, submitted the case, without argument.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The Judge, in his directions to the Jury, distinguishes between cases where the law reserves interest upon the contract, and those in which the Jury, in their discretion, may allow it. He decides, that in the first case, the law applies the payment primarily, to the discharge of the interest, the balance of it, if any, to the extinguishment of the principal. In the second, that the law applies the payment to the principal alone; that the Jury cannot make a different application; and that if the payments amount to the principal, the interest being only an incident, and no part of the debt, is entirely lost.

I am not apprized of any such positive rule. If by law a debt bears interest, and a payment is made, the law applies the payment first to the discharge of the interest. If it is left by law, to the discretion of the Jury to give interest, or not, according to the circumstances of the case, and a payment is made—the payment is to

be applied to the interest, if the Jury should allow it, in the same manner as if the law reserved interest upon the contract. Determine the fact that interest is to be paid, whether it arises from the imperative injunctions of the law, or the discretion of the Jury in the particular case, and the result is the same—the law applies the payment to the interest. It is unlike the case, where a person is indebted in two debts, or two ways; there the debtor may apply the payment at the time of making it, as he pleases—*Cujus est dare, ejus est disponere.* If he fail to direct its application, the right of doing so devolves upon the creditor. Not so in cases of the kind before us; the application is made by law, and depends upon the facts of the case—if there is interest due it shall be first extinguished And it is immaterial, whether this fact be settled by law *a priori*, or allowed afterwards upon the adjustment of the account.

If the Judge is correct, it would be in the power of a debtor, in such cases, to avoid payment of the interest, by making a tender and bringing the money into Court—for that amounts to a payment, and the creditor is bound to receive his debt, although he protests the whole time, that interest is due, and refuses the sum tendered. Even after action brought, the nett sum may be brought into Court under the common rule, and the same result obtained. I cannot believe that such is the law.

Much is conceded in support of the Judge's opinion, to allow that there are in England, any cases, where it is imperative upon the Jury to allow interest; and even here, although our act of 1786 declares, that debts of a certain kind shall bear interest, yet neither that nor any other act declares, at what rate interest shall be given. The act of 1741 prohibits the taking more than six per cent. Within that sum, the amount to be allowed is left to the agreement of the parties, or the discretion of the Jury. The law of England is the same, as to the

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latter point, and silent on the former. It is true, both with us and in England, that it follows as a matter of course, to allow interest in certain cases; but there, and even here, in extreme cases, Juries, under the directions of the Court, have departed from this common custom. (*Child* v. *Devereux*, 1 *Murph.* 398). It is, in our Courts, a well settled rule, that interest shall be paid whenever the debt is ascertained, the amount known to the debtor, and the time of payment fixed. In this case, nothing was wanting but the signature of the Defendant, to bring it completely within the act of 1786. The account was stated, the balance struck, the paper endorsed as a settlement between the parties, and this all in the handwriting of the Defendant. When our rule, before mentioned, shall have received the sanction of time, and a distinction shall be attempted between debts imperatively bearing interest, and those which do, or do not, according to the discretion of the Jury, there will be no difficulty in classing such a debt as this. In England, those cases in which interest follows of course, had precisely the same beginning, and now its allowance is so well established, that within a few years, a Jury is dispensed with, and it is referred to the Clerk, upon a default, to ascertain the amount.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

Rice B. Pierce
v.
Edmund Myrick, } From Halifax.

In trespass for killing a slave, an outrage by the slave less than a threatened felony, will justify the killing.

In such an action, evidence of the slave's good character is admissible, to repel the presumption of his improper conduct.

In trespass, where not guilty, and a justification are pleaded, and the Jury find the first issue for the Defendant, the rejection of admissible testimony pertinent to the latter only, is not ground for a new trial.

TRESPASS for killing the negro of the Plaintiff. The Defendant plead Not Guilty, and a Justification.

On the trial, before DANIEL, Judge, after giving in evidence circumstances from which the killing by the Defendant might be inferred, the Plaintiff offered evidence of the peaceable and submissive character of the slave, in order to rebut the presumption of such ill conduct in him, as would justify the Defendant in killing him, if the Jury should infer that he was killed by the Defendant. This evidence was objected to by the Defendant, and rejected by the Judge.

His Honor instructed the Jury, that if the circumstances in proof before them, rendered it probable to their minds, that the Defendant killed the negro, they should find for the Plaintiff, unless they collected from those circumstances, a reasonable inference that the slave was killed by the Defendant, to defend his person or property from some threatened felony.

The entry of the verdict was, "the Jury find all the issues in favor of the Defendant, and the Defendant not guilty."

A rule for a new trial being discharged, the Plaintiff appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff. *Badger*, for the Defendant, submitted the case without argument.

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HENDERSON, Judge.—The Plaintiff has certainly no ground to complain of the charge of the Judge, for it left the Defendant very narrow grounds, on which to rest his justification—too narrow, in the case of an outrage attempted by a slave.

As to the evidence of the general good character, and orderly deportment of the slave offered by the Plaintiff, and rejected by the Judge, I think it should have been received, to repel the presumption, relied on by the Defendant as a justification. It was relevant, as it tended in the absence of positive proof, to throw light upon the subject, and aid the Jury in arriving at the most probable conclusion, as to the circumstances under which the act was committed by the Defendant, if in fact it was committed by him. But the Plaintiff is not entitled to a new trial on that ground, because the Jury having found the Defendant *not guilty*, the justification could not have been passed on by them. Although they have found all the issues in favor of the Defendant, (which is a very improper way of entering a verdict, as the facts in issue should be either affirmed or disaffirmed,) yet they also find the Defendant *not guilty*. We cannot impute to the Jury the absurdity of saying, that the Defendant was justified in an act, which they at the same time say he did not commit.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

John Barnes
v.
Turner Dickinson,
} From Wayne.

DETINUE, tried before his honor, Judge DONNELL, and after a verdict for the Defendant, the Plaintiff moved for a new trial upon the following grounds:

1st. That one *Cooke*, who had been examined as a witness for the Defendant, was interested in the event of the

cause, and that this interest was not discovered by the Plaintiff, until after the Jury had returned their verdict.

2d. That the Deposition of one *Rebecca Hicks* had been read for the Defendant, which was in the handwriting of the witness *Cooke*.

3d. That the witness *Rebecca Hicks*, had declared to the Plaintiff before the trial of the suit, that she was illiterate, and knew nothing of the contents of the deposition.

The Defendant filed the affidavit of *Cooke*, the witness, who swore that the only way in which he was interested in the cause, arose from the fact that his father was the bail of the Defendant, and that his father was still alive. His Honor discharged the rule, and the Plaintiff appealed.

The case was submitted by *Gaston*, for the Plaintiff, and by *Badger*, for the Defendant.

HALL, Judge.—It does not appear that Cooke had such an interest in the cause as to render him incompetent.

As to what *Rebecca Hicks* told the Plaintiff, relative to her deposition, he had ample time to avail himself of it (if that could be done) on the trial; he might also then have objected to her deposition, because it was in the handwriting of *Cooke*, if that objection would have availed him. I think the Judge did right in not granting a new trial for these reasons.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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Andrew Hoyle
v.
Thomas Huson and others, devisees of Mason Huson, } From Lincoln.

A devisor devised so much of his lands as his wife could cultivate, to her during her life or widowhood, and that his executors should rent out the residue of his cleared land until his children came of age, to take it into possession. The life estate having expired during the nonage of some of the children, it was held that those of age, had a right to an immediate partition, of the whole of the land devised.

This was a petition for partition of land, devised by *Mason Huson* deceased, to his six children.

The will of *Mason Huson*, was attached to the petition, and made part of it. By it, the land of which partition was demanded, was devised as follows: "I will "that my wife *Mary Huson*, shall have such a part of "my land as she with her children and negroes, which "are left to her, can attend under crop annually, during "her natural life or widowhood, and the balance of clear "land, I will that it be rented out annually by my exe- "cutors, until my children come of age to take it into "their own possession."

The petition charged that *Mary Huson*, the wife of the Devisor, had marrried; that the Plaintiff had purchased the interest of *Elizabeth Huson*, one of the devisees, and that *Ridley Huson*, another of them, had died intestate, after the Devisor.

No answer or plea was filed; but from the orders made in the cause in the Court below, it appeared that some of the Devisees were infants when the petition was filed.

On the last Circuit, the cause was heard before his honor Judge Norwood, upon the motion of the Demandant, for a writ of partition, when his honor, thinking that the devisor had carved out of the inheritance a term

for years, which had not expired, and which vested in his executors, in trust for the maintenance of his children, until the full age of the youngest, dismissed the petition—from which the Demandant appealed.

The cause was submitted by *Wilson*, for the Demandant. No counsel appeared for the Defendants.

HALL, Judge.—The clause of the will, on which the question in this case turns, is as follows: "I will that my wife *Mary Huson*, shall have such a part of my land, as she with her children and negroes, which are left to her, can attend under crop annually, during her natural life or widowhood; and the balance of clear land, I will that it be rented out by my executors, until my children come of age, to take it into their own possession." It is stated that *Mary Huson* is since married; and I suppose it may be taken for granted, that *Elizabeth Huson* was of full age, when the petitioner purchased her interest in the land in question. Whether *Ridley Huson* died before or since that purchase, is not stated. If since, the petitioner has no right to his share of the land. But I suppose the real question intended to be submitted, is, whether the petitioner has a present right to have partition, consistently with that clause of the will before recited.

The reason why the devisor directed the land to be rented out until his children came of age, was that before that time, they were presumed not to have sufficient capacity to manage it. Now, there was no one time, when all the children came of age—that event happened at different periods. When one of them came of age, he or she thereby acquired capacity to manage his or her property, and that one had no concern in point of interest, whether the others were minors or not. The land was to be divided amongst them, and it made no difference with the minors, whether the one that was of age, managed his property or not. It is not stated in the case, that the

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land undivided, yielded more to each claimant, that it would do, when divided. Nor is there an appropriation made of the rents and profits of the land for any particular purpose, or for any particular time, so as to prevent a partition as the children severally arrived at maturity. Again, suppose one of them to be of age, and others of them of very tender years; it may be ten or fifteen years, or perhaps a longer time, before the one of age could be let into the possession of his land, although the infants would not be at all benefited, by a continuance of the tenancy in common. Much injury might in such a case, be done to the elder branches of the family, and no possible benefit could result to the younger. I therefore think the petitioner has a right, at the present time, to have partition made, as prayed for in the petition.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and judgment for the Demandant, that partition be made.

Nathan Hamrick, v. Francis Hogg. } From Rutherford.

Moral turpitude in the Defendant is necessary to charge him in an action for a deceit.

Where the Defendant, in an action for a deceit in the sale of a slave, had been informed that the slave was unsound, if he does not credit the fact, he is not bound to disclose it.

CASE for a deceit in the sale of a female slave. On the trial, it appeared that the negro had belonged to one *Rutherford*, who died intestate, in the year 1819. Letters of administration upon his estate, did not issue until January, 1823, when the Defendant being appointed administrator, took the personal property into his possession, and sold the negro in dispute to the Plaintiff, in February 1823, at public auction. During the

interval from *Rutherford's* death, until the appointment of the Defendant, the negroes belonging to the estate had been hired out, under an order of the County Court. The Plaintiff, proved by the person who hired the negro for the year before the sale, that in the first part of that year, her health was very bad, and that she was unable to work—but that in the latter part of it she was better, and rendered him some services—that when he returned the slave to the Defendant, in January 1823, he informed the Defendant of this sickness, and on that account claimed a deduction from the hire. The witness also swore, that at the same time, he offered to keep the slave until the sale, which was then advertised, on the same terms he had given for the year which was then just past.

His honor Judge NORWOOD, instructed the Jury that if they believed the Defendant, at the time of the sale, had forgotten the information given him by the witness as to the health of the negro, they ought to find for him. But if they collected from the testimony, that such information had been given, and not forgotten by him, and that he did communicate it to the Plaintiff, his belief as to the truth of the information, would not exonerate him from liability, which would depend on the fact whether the negro was well or not.

A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

The case was submitted without argument, by the *Attorney-General* and *Devereux*, for the Plaintiff. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HENDERSON, Judge.—This action is founded on a fraud; to support it, there must be either a fraudulent misrepresentation, or a fraudulent concealment. It is not sufficient that the representation be false in point of fact; the Defendant must be guilty of a moral falsehood.

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The party making a representation, must know or believe it to be false, or what is the same thing, have no reason to believe it to be true.

Concealment *ex vi termini* imports a knowledge of the thing concealed; for a person cannot be said to conceal that which he does not know, and silence, as to a fact which the party does not believe to exist, cannot be said to be a fraudulent concealment. I cannot therefore agree with the Judge below, that the Defendant was bound to declare, and *was guilty of a fraud if he did not declare* that which he did not believe to exist, although he had been told that it did exist. It should have been left to the Jury to say whether the Defendant had a knowledge of the unsoundness of the negro.

I disturb this verdict with great reluctance, because I believe it meets both the law and the justice of the case.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

Lemuel Moore
v.
Joseph Moore, } From Rutherford.

Between brothers, administration will be committed to the one most interested to execute it faithfully.

The County Court has power to revoke letters of administration issued during the same term, and to grant them to another.

The County Court of Rutherford, on the Monday of March Term, 1827, ordered that letters of administration upon the estate of *Rebecca Flecher*, should issue to *Lemuel Moore*. The next day those letters were revoked, and administration committed to *Joseph Moore*. On an appeal to the Superior Court, it appeared that *George Moore*, the father of the present parties, died in the year 1817, leaving a will, of which he appointed his sons *Lemuel* and *Joseph* executors; by it he directed his estate to be equally divided between his four children, of whom

Rebecca Flecher was one. Property of the testator came to the hands both of *Joseph* and *Lemuel*, the former of whom had settled with the legatees, but the latter had refused to account for the assets which came to his hands, and a petition was pending against him, filed by *Joseph*, *Rebecca* and *James*, the other children of *George Moore*. *Rebecca Flecher* had been dead two years, she left children but no one had applied for letters of administration upon her estate.

His honor Judge Norwood, affirmed the judgment of the County Court, and awarded a writ of *procedendo*, whereupon *Lemuel Moore* appealed to this Court.

Wilson, for the Appellant, submitted the case without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Appellee.

Hall, Judge.—Both the County and Superior Courts have appointed *Joseph Moore* the administrator of *Rebecca Flecher* deceased; and in the absence of all evidence in the case, this Court would see no reason why he ought to be removed, and another appointed. But from the evidence which accompanies this case, abundant reason is shown why he ought *not* to be removed.

The rights of the next of kin of *Rebecca Flecher* are more likely to be legally adjusted, where they are identified with similar rights claimed by *Joseph Moore*, both of which are to be examined and decided on in the petition now pending between him and *Lemuel Moore*.

The circumstance that *Lemuel* had been previously appointed at the same term is not of itself a sufficient objection to the appointment of *Joseph*. It admits of two answers: 1st, it does not appear, that *Joseph* had previous notice of the intended application; 2d, all the days of the term are considered as one, and every thing is in the power of the Court during its continuance.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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Joel Estes
v.
Peter Hairston,
} From Stokes.

A Certiorari being intended as a substitute for an appeal, can only be allowed on the same terms as are prescribed in relation to appeals. *It seems* an assignable contract, can only be assigned by writing on some part of the same paper which contains the contract.

Gaston and *Badger* moved for a *certiorari* to bring up the record of a case lately pending in Stokes Superior Court, between *Hairston*, as Plaintiff, and *Estes*, as Defendant. The petition of *Estes* stated, that *Hairston* brought suit, by attachment, against the petitioner, who was on his way, with a considerable number of slaves, from Virginia to Tennessee; and while passing through the county of Stokes, his negroes were attached, and before he could procure bail and replevy them, the expenses of their maintenance, while in the custody of the Sheriff, amounted to $1400. At the Autumn term, 1826, of the Court below, the cause was tried, and a verdict found against the Petitioner for nearly $10,000—and a motion being made for a new trial and overruled, the Petitioner prayed an appeal; but the sum being large, and he in a strange country, was unable to procure security. The Petitioner then set forth the efforts he had made, by sale or mortgage of his estate, to procure the security, and his inability to accomplish it; that he was advised injustice had been done him by the verdict, and that the Judge erred in his decisions at the trial, and hence his exertions to find security had been continued without intermission. In the meantime, *Hairston* having proceeded against petitioner's bail, and being about to obtain judgment against them, petitioner had recently surrendered himself in their discharge, and was now in execution for the judgment. The prayer of the petitioner was, for a *certiorari* to issue without security.

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To the petition was appended a copy of the case, made up by the presiding Judge below; from which it appeared that the Plaintiff declared, as assignee of *Robert Hairston*, upon a writen agreement, in these words: "Memoran- "dum of an agreement made between *Robert Hairston* and "*Joel Estes* and *W. & E. W. Estes*, all of the county of "Pittsylvania, Virginia. The said *Hairston* agrees to "sell the said *Estes* his crop of tobacco, at the following "plantations (naming them) estimated at between 60 and "80,000 weight, for which said *Estes* agrees to give the "said *Hairston* ten dollars per hundred weight, payable "at or before the first day of December next. The to- "bacco to be delivered by the 25th of April next." This agreement was executed in Virginia, in March, 1818, when the parties resided in that State. The assignment under which the Plaintiff claimed to sue on the contract, was not endorsed thereon, or attached thereto, but was written on a separate paper, and executed in Stokes County, North-Carolina, the 4th of December 1822. By this instrument, *Robert Hairston* assigned to *Peter* all his interest "in and to a certain instrument of writing re- "lative to a tobacco contract, signed, &c." (describing it) and also "appointing him the attorney in fact of *Ro-* "*bert* to sue in his *(Peter's)* name, and recover to his "own use, &c."

It was insisted by the Defendant's Counsel, that the contract declared upon, was not assignable in North-Carolina, whatever might be the law of Virginia, and that no assignment made here could enable the Plaintiff to sue in his own name—and also, that if the contract were assignable, yet the interest therein could not be transferred by a writing on a separate paper, entirely detached from the contract intended to be assigned.

But the presiding Judge (DANIEL) was of opinion against the Defendant, on both points, and the Plaintiff had a verdict.

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On hearing the petition of *Estes*, with the accompanying affidavits, and the case made by the Judge below, the Court were clearly of opinion, that the Judge had erred—and said, even if the contract were assignable, the position could not be maintained, that such assignment could be made on a detached paper. It must appear on the same paper on which the contract to be assigned is written, though it is not material on what part of the paper, whether on the face or the back. HENDERSON, Judge, said, the only difficulty seemed to be, how to get the case before the Court—that it was a clear case for a *Certiorari*; but the Court doubted its power to dispense with security—though if the Court possessed the power, it would feel no hesitation to exercise it, as the petitioner's case seemed to be one of hardship and oppression.—A few days after,

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice, informed the Counsel, that he and his brothers had considered the case, and were of opinion, that security must be required—that the *Certiorari* is merely a substitute for an appeal, where the party has been deprived of the benefit of the latter by accident, &c. and is intended to place the party in the same situation as if he had obtained his appeal. But as the law is imperative, that no appeal shall be granted without security, the *Certiorari* which is substituted for the appeal, must be subject to the like condition. He added, that the Court had reluctantly come to this conclusion, being very desirous to aid the Petitioner, whose situation seemed to render it very difficult to procure surety, and whose case demanded relief.

It was thereupon ordered, that a *Certiorari* issue, and a special writ to the Sheriff commanding him, on security being given for the *Certiorari*, and that fact certified to him by the Clerk of the Court below, that he should admit the Petitioner to bail, and discharge him out of custody.

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The State
v.
Wm. G. Younger & Rich'd I. Cook, } From Rutherford.

A combination by two or more to do any unlawful act, or one prejudicial to another, is indictable at common law, as a conspiracy.

A combination by two to cheat a third person, by making him drunk and playing falsely at cards with him, is indictable at common law.

The Defendants were tried before his honor Judge Norwood, upon the following indictment:

"The Jurors for the State upon their oath present, that *William G. Younger* and *Richard I. Cook*, on, &c. at, &c. did combine, conspire, confederate and agree, to and with each other, to cheat and defraud one P. D. out of his goods and chattels, and in pursuance of the aforesaid agreement, so as aforesaid between them had and made, the said W. G. Y. and R. I. C. did, at, &c. cause and procure the said P. D. to be intoxicated, and did then and there propose to him, the said P. D. to play at a game of cards for money. By means whereof, the said W. G. Y. and R. I. C. by falsely, fraudulently and deceitfully playing at the game of cards, with him the said P. D. for money, they the said W. G. Y. and R. I. C. did then and there cheat and defraud him, the said P. D. out of the sum, &c. And so the Jurors aforesaid, upon their oath aforesaid, do say, that the aforesaid W. G. Y. and R. I. C. by means of the aforesaid combination, conspiracy, confederation and agreement, so as aforesaid, between them, in manner and form as aforesaid had and made, him the said P. D. of the aforesaid sum, &c. of the goods and chattels of him the said P. D. then and there, in manner and form aforesaid, by falsely, corruptly and deceitfully playing and gambling at the game of cards aforesaid, falsely and deceitfully did cheat and defraud, to, &c. and against the peace and dignity of the State."

After a verdict for the State, the Defendant moved in arrest of judgment, upon the ground that the facts set forth in the indictment did not constitute any offence at common law. His Honor overruled the motion and gave judgment for the State, upon which the Defendants appealed.

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State v. Younger & Cook.

The case was submitted by the *Attorney-General*, for the State without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendants.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It is to be decided in this case, whether the facts set forth in the indictment, and which are affirmed by the finding of the Jury, constitute an indictable offence at common law. The charge in substance is, that the Defendants conspired together to defraud and cheat the prosecutor out of his goods; and to accomplish that end, they procured him to be intoxicated, and engaged him to play at cards, when they fraudulently cheated him out of three hundred dollars. Conspiracy was anciently confined to imposing by combination a false crime upon any person, or conspiring to convict an innocent person, by perjury and a perversion of the law. But it is certain, that modern cases have extended the doctrine far beyond the old rule of law, and it has long been established that every conspiracy to injure individuals, or to do acts which are unlawful, or prejudicial to the community, is a conspiracy, and indictable. As where divers persons confederate together by indirect means to impoverish another; or falsely and maliciously to charge a man with being the reputed father of a bastard child; or to maintain one another in any matter, whether it is true or false, (1 *Hawk.* 446, *sec.* 2). Playing at cards for money is in itself unlawful, and where two persons conspire together to make an unlawful act the means of doing an injury to, or impoverishing another, it is stronger than many of the cases which have been held indictable. Even a bare conspiracy to do a lawful act, to an unlawful end, has been held indictable, though no act was done in consequence thereof, (8 *Mod.* 321). The conspiracy to do the act constitutes the offence, though if an individual only were concerned, the offence must have been complete before the indictment would lie. The line of distinction is accu-

rately marked in *Wheatly's case* (2 *Burr.* 1125) between cheats perpetrated by an individual, and which can only be effected by false tokens, and a conspiracy between two or more to commit the like offence. The indictment was at Common Law, and against a brewer, for that he, "intending to deceive and defraud A. W. of his money, falsely, fraudulently and deceitfully, sold and delivered to him, sixteen gallons of amber, for and as eighteen gallons of the same liquor, and received fifteen shillings as for the eighteen gallons, knowing there were only sixteen gallons." The Court were clearly of opinion, that the offence was not indictable, but only a civil injury, for which an action lay to recover damages. *Lord Mansfield* said, it amounted only to an unfair dealing, and an imposition on this particular man, by which he could not have suffered, but from his own carelessness in not measuring it; whereas fraud, to be the object of criminal prosecution, must be of that kind, which in its nature is calculated to defraud numbers, as false weights or measures, false tokens, *or where there is a conspiracy.* There are various instances of convictions in the books, for cheats, in their nature private, and without false tokens, but they were indicted as conspiracies; nor could the indictments have been sustained without this circumstance. (*Regina* v. *M'Kurty*, 2 *Ld. Ray.* 1179. 2 *East's P. C.* 823). There is a very strong case in 1 *Mass. Rep.* 478, where the Defendants were indicted and convicted of a conspiracy to cheat the prosecutor out of his goods, by obtaining credit for them, on the false assertion that they were about to set up a retail store. No motion was there made in arrest of judgment. Upon the whole, I think this indictment sustainable on Common Law principles, and that it describes a complicated offence, much more aggravated than many of the cases in the books, on which convictions have taken place; for here is a cheating by means of a conspiracy—making the prosecutor drunk, and playing at cards.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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The State
v.
Archibald Johnson, } From New-Hanover.

The act of 1825 was passed to prevent the asportation of slaves by persons having those facilities to do it, which a connexion with a ship gives. The act of concealing a slave on ship board, with the intent to carry him from the State, by a person having no connexion with that ship, is not within the mischief. An indictment on the statute, which did not charge the prisoner to be in any way connected with the ship in which the slave was concealed, was therefore held to be fatally defective.

The prisoner was tried upon an indictment consisting of four counts—upon the first and third of which only, he was convicted.

The first count was as follows:

"The Jurors for the State, upon their oath, present, that Archibald Johnson, late of New-Hanover, on the twenty-first day of February, in the year of our Lord one thousand eight hundred and twenty-seven, he, the said Archibald Johnson, then being within this State, on board a certain vessel called the Sally Ann, with force and arms, in the County of New-Hanover, feloniously did conceal, on board the said vessel, a certain Mulatto Slave, named Frederic; the said Mulatto Slave then being the property of a citizen of this State, to wit, the property of one Edward B. Dudley, without the consent in writing of the said Edward B. Dudley, the owner of the Slave, previously obtained, with the intent, and for the purpose of carrying and conveying the said Mulatto Slave out of this State; contrary to the form of the statute in such case made and provided, and against the peace and dignity o the State."

The third count was exactly like the first, with the exception that it charged that the prisoner "*did convey on board,*" instead of "*did conceal on board.*"

After verdict, his honor Judge RUFFIN, upon a motion in arrest of judgment, delivered the following opinion, which is extracted from the case sent to this Court:

"But the Court, considering the indictment, doth deem it insufficient to authorise sentence of death upon

the prisoner, because it charges only, that the prisoner, being in this State, *on board a certain vessel*, called the Sally Ann, but without charging that he was the master or the cook, or a mariner of some other description, then on board as such. From the whole act taken together, it is thought to extend only to seafaring persons, and those belonging, or attached to the particular vessel to which the slave is conveyed, or in which he is concealed, and not to embrace even seamen forming the crew of another vessel, much less mere landsmen, though they may convey and conceal a slave in a vessel, and, in so doing, may get upon, or into the vessel, so as to be literally, *on board of her*. Casual, or wrongful, or temporary personal presence on board, does not either create the temptation, or present the facility for executing the crime, of which the statute enacts the punishment. Only a permanent occupation of the vessel, as a matter of right or duty, either as commanding or serving the ship, or controlling the cargo, or taking passage for a voyage, accompanied with actual personal presence in conveying, receiving or concealing the slave, is *such a being on board*, as is within the meaning of the act. This indictment, although it follows the words of the statute, by alleging that the prisoner *being on board*, &c. contains no averment of the *capacity* in which he was thus on board; so that he might have been a Landsman, or belong to another ship, and gone on board the Sally Ann, only to convey the slave, remaining only to conceal him, and then left the vessel. Such a case is covered by this indictment. So that the innocence of the prisoner, so far as respects the felony created by this statute, is consistent, and may well stand with the averments of the indictment, inasmuch as, for aught appearing to the contrary, he may be a *mere stranger* to the *Sally Ann*. As his connexion with the vessel must be proved by extrinsic evidence to bring his case before the Jury, within the meaning of the Statute, it is equally necessary that

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this indictment should aver the fact, to which such evidence is applicable, and for want of such averment, the guilt of the prisoner is not affirmed by the verdict. For this reason, the Court doth arrest the judgment."

From this judgment the *Solicitor* appealed.

The cause was submitted by the *Attorney-General*, on the part of the State, without argument. No Counsel appeared for the prisoner.

Taylor, Chief Justice.—The act of 1825, on which this indictment is framed, is amendatory of the act of 1792, on the same subject—the principal defect of which seems to have been, that it made it criminal, only in the master or commander of any ship or vessel trading within this State, to carry out of this State, or to conceal on board for that purpose, any slave the property of a citizen of this State. Now the offence might often be perpetrated by persons belonging to the vessel, without the knowlege or privity of the master, whose vessel might thus be made subservient to the felonious carrying away the property, without any criminality in him. The same danger did not exist with regard to persons not belonging to the vessel; for it was not probable that they could carry away, or conceal, in the vessel of another, this kind of property. The mischief to be guarded against was, that of some person belonging to the vessel, besides the captain, committing the act. The law accordingly is extended to the mariners, or any other person or persons trading, or being within this State. There are frequently on board vessels from the Northern and Eastern States, persons who bring articles for sale, and dispose of them on board, who are not, strictly speaking, mariners, though they may occasionally assist in working the vessel. They are nevertheless attached to the vessel, and have as much facility as the master or mariners,

to commit the offence. That the Legislature meant only to include persons attached to the vessel, is apparent, I think, from the consideration of the objects of the act, following in the same clause, where they drop the words "trading or being within the State," and say "person or persons on board any such ship or vessel;" so that connecting the words together, they would read, "if any master of any ship or vessel, mariner, or any other person, trading or being within the State, on board of any such ship or vessel." From which I think it follows, that the indictment ought to have described the prisoner as one of the persons attached to the vessel, against whom the penalty of the law is denounced, and that the reasoning of the Judge who tried the cause, leads to the conclusion, that the judgment ought to be arrested.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

The State
v.
Joseph Wier,
} From Cabarrus.

An accomplice is a competent witness for the prosecution, on the trial of his associate.

When a bill of sale is introduced *as a forgery*, for the purpose of supporting the credit of a witness, the subscribing witness need not be produced on the trial.

Where on the removal of a cause, the transcript does not state either the appointment of a foreman to the Grand Jury, or a motion for the removal, they may be inferred from other entries on the record.

An indictment against the prisoner, for Grand Larceny, was found in the Superior Court of Lincoln County, which, on the affidavit of the prisoner, was removed for trial to Iredell County. Upon the cause being called in the Superior Court of Iredell, it was removed again, on the affidavit of the prisoner, to Cabar-

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rus County, where it was tried on the last Circuit before his honor Judge Norwood.

The transcript from Lincoln, did not state that a foreman to the Grand Jury had been appointed. The entry, after stating the term, and the Judge who held the Court, set forth that, 'The following Grand Jury was impanelled, sworn and charged, to wit, A. B. foreman, &c. who returned a bill of indictment, &c.' The indictment was also endorsed "A true bill, A. B. foreman." Neither did the transcript from Lincoln, set out any *motion* made by the prisoner, for the removal of the cause to Iredell; but his affidavit of those facts upon which such orders are usually made, was copied into, and formed a part of the record.

On the trial, the *Solicitor* introduced a witness in behalf of the State, one *Jones*, who was objected to by the prisoner, on the ground that he was an accomplice.—His Honor however overruled the objection, and the witness was examined before the Jury. He swore, that while one *Kenedy* and himself were at the house of the prisoner, making preparations to carry off several stolen negroes, the prisoner gave them the form of a bill of sale for a slave, and directed them to draw by that form, four others—that *Kenedy* accordingly drew four bills of sale to him, the witness each for a slave, signed them as an attesting witness, and put two other names to them, as witnesses also,—that these bills of sale were given to the prisoner, without any name being to them as a vendor—that the prisoner took them, and in about three hours returned them, with the name of *John Moore*, signed as the vendor. After the examination of *Jones*, the *Solicitor* offered, for the purpose of supporting his testimony, to read to the Jury the four bills of sale. The Counsel for the prisoner objected to the introduction of these papers, unless they were proved by the subscribing witnesses. This objection was also overruled by his Honor, and the papers were read to the Jury.

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After a verdict for the State, the Counsel for the prisoner obtained a rule for a new trial, on account of the introduction of incompetent testimony; which being discharged, they moved in arrest of judgment, for the following reasons:

1. Because the record did not show that a foreman to the Grand Jury had been appointed by the Superior Court of Lincoln.

2. Because it did not appear upon the record, that the cause was removed from Lincoln on the motion of the prisoner.

The presiding Judge overruled the motion, and awarded judgment of death; from which the prisoner appealed.

The *Attorney-General* submitted the case, without argument. No Counsel appeared for the prisoner.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—On the first question arising on the motion for a new trial, as to the competency of *Jones*, the decision of the Superior Court was in conformity to the principles of the Common Law, and the long established course of practice in this State. In deciding upon the competency of a witness, the Court can exclude him, only after conviction of an infamous offence, or for direct interest in the event of the cause. The confession of guilty, simply, without a conviction, is not sufficient to render a man legally infamous; for a copy of the judgment, as well as the conviction, must be produced, and therefore the testimony of an avowed accomplice may, in all cases, be taken, even though an indictment has been found against him, for the offence respecting which his evidence is admitted. (*Hawkins B.* 2, *c.* 46, *sec.* 94). Allowing the partakers in the crime to convict their companions in guilt, was introduced in the room of the old custom, by which they were allowed to become approvers. In that the Court exercised a dis-

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cretionary power whether to admit them or not; but they are bound to admit accomplices, even though they have received a promise of pardon, or are entitled by some statute, to claim a reward on the prisoner's conviction. (*Wills* 425. *Hawkins, B.* 2. *c.* 46. 4 *Black. Com.* 330). The accomplice may entertain a hope of pardon, if he make a free disclosure, and therefore he must have some interest in the conviction of the offender. This may affect his credit with the Jury, but does not take away his competency. It is now settled, that his evidence may be left to the Jury, who, if they believe him, may convict the prisoner.

With respect to requiring proof of the pretended bills of sale by a subscribing witness, that was impossible to be effected, for *Kenedy* put his own name as one witness, and signed the name of two other persons, before there was any signature by a feigned vendor. They were introduced as forgeries incapable of being proved as genuine instruments, and offered only to shew the probability of *Jones's* evidence.

The first reason in arrest of judgment is, that the record does not show that the Superior Court of Lincoln appointed a foreman to the Grand Jury. To this objection, the record furnishes an answer, that there was a foreman to the Grand Jury, as appears, both from the list of their names and his endorsement upon the bill of indictment, and he could be appointed only by the Court; and as it is further stated, that the Grand Jury was impannelled, sworn and charged, we cannot be ignorant that the Court had previously appointed a foreman. So with respect to the objection, that the prisoner made no motion to remove the case from Lincoln: the prisoner made a strong affidavit for the removal, and it was ordered by the Court.—On all the grounds, I think the conviction is right.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

CASES

ARGUED AND DETERMINED

IN THE

SUPREME COURT

OF

NORTH-CAROLINA.

JUNE TERM, 1828.

Den ex dem. of Arthur Walker & wife
v.
Fen and Samuel Greenlee. } From Wilkes.

A Judge of the Superior Court has power to continue a cause upon the condition of reading absolutely the deposition of a resident witness; and a party accepting the terms, cannot on the trial, insist upon the production of the witness.

EJECTMENT, tried on the last circuit, before his Honor Judge DONNELL.

At the term before the trial, the Defendant had applied for a continuance, which was granted, upon condition that several depositions then filed in the cause, and among them that of one *Ford*, should be read absolutely. On the trial, the deposition of *Ford*, was offered by the lessor of the Plaintiff, and objected to by the Defendant, upon the ground that the witness being a resident of this State, the Judge who made the order, had no power to impose upon the Defendant the terms of permitting it to be read absolutely. The presiding Judge overruled the objection, and a verdict being returned for the lessors of the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

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Ladd v. Hairston,

Gaston, for the lessors of the Plaintiff, submitted the case without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HALL, Judge.—Whether it was right to continue the cause upon the terms of reading absolutely on the trial, the depositions filed, and among them that of *Ford*, is a question not open for us to decide, it was a matter solely within the discretion of the Judge, who made the order. It does not appear that in making it he has violated any rule of law. His opinion may have been formed upon a variety of circumstances wholly unknown to us, we must therefore say that the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Constantine D. Ladd
v.
Peter Hairston.
} From Stokes.

An appeal lies to the Superior Court from a judgment of the County Court, upon a petition for a cart way.

This was a petition originally filed in the County Court, whereby the petitioner prayed that a jury be summoned to "lay off a cart way according to law, from &c. over the lands of *Peter Hairston*, &c."

A jury returned their verdict, laying off the way according to the prayer of the petition, and a judgment of confirmation was rendered in the County Court, from which the Defendant appealed to the Superior Court.

On the Fall Circuit of 1827, his honor Judge STRANGE, upon the motion of the petitioner's Counsel, dismissed the appeal, holding, that since the case of *Wood* v. *Hood*, (1 *Law Repos.* 513) the Superior Courts had no jurisdiction to revise such orders of the County Courts.

From this decision, the Defendant appealed to this Court.

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Ladd
v.
Hairston.

Nash, for the Defendant, was stopped by the Court. No Counsel appeared for the petitioner.

HALL, Judge.—In the case of *Hawkins* v. *The County of Randolph*, (1 *Murph.* 118) it was decided that an appeal would not lie to the Superior Court, from an order of the County Court, concerning a public road. By the act of 1813, (*Rev. ch.* 862) an appeal is given in such cases, but nothing is said either by the Court in the case of *Wood* v. *Hood*, or by the Legislature in that act, respecting private ways or cartways; jurisdiction of which is given to the County Courts, by the act of 1798.

In *Wood* v. *Hood*, it was held, that a petition for a cartway so far resembled a petition for a public road, that an appeal would not lie from a decision made on it, before the passage of the act of 1813, and that the act gave an appeal.

I think the act of 1813, does not give an appeal with respect to cartways, &c. but is confined altogether to public roads. In the present case, the appeal is proper under the act of 1777, it being a contest between two individuals, and it does not fall within the reasons upon which an appeal was refused, with regard to public roads.

The judgment of the Superior Court, dismissing the appeal, must therefore be reversed, and the cause remanded.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment of the Court below reversed and writ of *procedendo* awarded.

June 1828.

David Shelton
v.
Charles Yancy.
} From Granville.

The purchaser of a slave at auction, where the terms were that bond and surety was to be given before the property passed, obtains a title, although the bond of another person is taken for the purchase money.

This was an action of replevin for a negro, and on the trial it appeared, that one *Field* being indebted to the Plaintiff, it was agreed between them that *Field* should purchase at an auction to be held by one *Epperson*, the negro in dispute, and the Plaintiff was to take him in discharge of his debt. *Field* applied to the Defendant to bid off the negro for him, which was done; after the slave was cried off, the Defendant requested he might be charged to *Field*, but *Epperson* refused to do this, and directed that he should be charged to the Defendant, who observed that if he was to be held responsible for the negro, he would hold on upon him. The terms of the sale being, that bond and surety should be given for the price of the negro, before the property was changed, *Field* applied to the Plaintiff to become his surety, who declined. A similar request was then made by *Field* to the Defendant, who consented, upon condition that he should be discharged at the next County Court, to set within a few days. After *Field* had given surety, he delivered the negro to the Plaintiff, as his property, in the presence of the Defendant, and received a discharge to the amount of the value of the negro. After this delivery, the Defendant said to the Plaintiff, that the negro was to be his (the Defendant's) unless he was released from his suretyship for *Field*, at the next County Court; to which the Plaintiff assented. *Field* wholly neglected to release or to indemnify the Defendant, whereupon he took the negro in his possession. There was no evidence that the Plaintiff was pre-

sent at the time *Field* agreed to indemnify the Defendant. Neither was there any evidence that the negro was delivered to the Defendant, or was in his possession before the taking for which the action was brought.

His Honor, Judge DANIEL, charged the Jury that the legal title to the negro vested in the Defendant, upon his bidding him off, and the price being charged to him.—That if the Defendant delivered the negro to the Plaintiff, either under an agreement between the Defendant and *Field*, or the Plaintiff and Defendant, or *Field* and the Plaintiff, as the property of the Plaintiff, the title thereby vested in the Plaintiff, and he was entitled to a verdict. But if *Yancy* insisted on retaining the title to the negro, until he was indemnified on account of his responsibility for *Field*, and only delivered the negro to the Plaintiff to keep, until he was indemnified, then the title did not pass to the Plaintiff upon the delivery to him, but remained in the Defendant, and he had a right to re-take the negro, upon *Field's* neglecting or refusing to indemify him. Under this charge, the Jury returned a verdict for the Defendant, and the Plaintiff appealed.

Nash, for the Plaintiff, contended, that the Judge erred in saying to the Jury that the property in the negro vested in the Defendant, upon his bidding him off. He should have instructed them that it vested in him only when he complied with the terms of the sale.

Badger & W. H. Haywood, contra, insisted that the charge of the Judge was to be taken with reference to the objection made to the Defendant's title, which was, that as *Yancy* had no bill of sale, he had no title. The instruction to the Jury was that a sale and delivery superceded the necessity of a bill of sale, and that such a sale was not within the act of 1821.

PER CURIAM.—The charge of the Judge below was correct, and the judgment must be affirmed.

JUNE 1828.

Francis Ward
v.
Horace Ely. } From Washington.

In articles for the purchase of land, whereby the purchaser covenanted to pay in notes "such as he would be responsible for," the covenant binds him as a guarantor.

A deposition must be sealed up by the commissioners, so as to prevent inspection and alteration; it need not be certified under the seals of the commissioners.

COVENANT upon articles for the sale of land, the material part of which is as follows: "And I do agree to "make the payments in the following manner, one-third "on the 1st of March 1820, in your own (the Plaintiff's) "notes or cash, one-third on the 1st of March, 1821, in "notes of hand such as I will be responsible for the pay-"ment of," with a stipulation precisely similar as to the residue of the purchase money. The breach assigned, was that the Defendant had refused to pay the amount of a note made by one *Blount*, payable to him, and by him delivered to the Plaintiff, in discharge of one of the two last instalments of the purchase money.

On the trial, the Defendant offered in evidence a deposition "taken in the city of New-York, and the caption "stated that attended on the part of the "Plaintiff, and S. B. C. and A. R. as commissioners on "the part of the Defendant. The deposition was taken "by said C. and said R. who were named commission-"ers in the said commission, but was not certified under "their seal or seals." The presiding Judge refused to let the deposition be read. It was proved that *Blount* was insolvent when the note was delivered to the Plaintiff, and that his insolvency was then known to the Defendant.

His Honor Judge MARTIN, instructed the Jury to enquire whether the amount due upon *Blount's* note would be lost to the Plaintiff, unless made good to him by the

Defendant, and "if they should be of opinion it would be lost, they were then to enquire whether the loss was owing to the laches and want of due diligence on the part of the Plaintiff, or whether it was owing to the insolvency or want of ability, in *Blount* to pay. If the former, they ought to find for the Defendant; if it was owing to the insolvency of *Blount*, they ought to find for the Plaintiff." Under this charge, a verdict was returned for the Plaintiff, and the Defendant obtained a rule for a new trial; 1st, because the Judge erred in rejecting the deposition; 2d, on the ground of misdirection. The rule being discharged and judgment rendered on the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

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Hogg, for the Defendant, insisted, that the Judge below erred in rejecting the deposition. The fact that it was not certified under the hands and seals of the commissioners, was no objection to it; the direction in the writ to return it under the hands and seals of the commissioners, only meant that it should not be sent open, and therefore liable to inspection and alteration.

2d. That the Judge erred in his charge to the Jury; he should have instructed them that no action could be brought on the covenant, because its meaning was not to guaranty the notes assigned, but to give the Plaintiff an option, either to take them without endorsement, or to require the Defendant's endorsement. If *Blount's* note was taken by the Plaintiff without endorsement, the Defendant was not answerable, because the Plaintiff had exercised his election; if it was endorsed to the Plaintiff, then the Defendant was liable only upon his endorsement, and in either case the covenant was *functus officio*.

Devereux, on the other side, contended, that the Judge below had rejected the deposition upon the fact which he had ascertained, that it was taken by the *agent* of the Defendant, and however erroneous his decision was, yet

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being upon a collateral issue of fact, it could not be reviewed in this Court.

2. Covenants are to be taken most strongly against the covenantor. Here the Defendant binds himself to a positive and unconditional responsibility; but the construction contended for, only gives the Plaintiff the option of no liability at all on the Defendant, or of that conditional obligation, which the law imposes upon an endorser. Suppose the action had been brought upon the endorsement of the Defendant, the covenant most clearly would be evidence to prove him liable, not as an endorser, but as a guarantee, and the spirit and meaning of the covenant is that he shall be so liable.

HALL, Judge.—The Plaintiff's remedy, upon the covenant, does not depend upon the question, whether he has used all the diligence in applying to *Blount* for payment, and in case of non payment in giving notice to the Defendant, which the law requires of an endorsee of a negotiable instrument, before he can maintain a suit against the endorser. Strict diligence in both respects, is held to be indispensable in the mercantile world, and indeed was required of every person, (whether merchant or not) who became a party to such instruments, until the case of *Britain* v. *Johnston*, decided at the last term, (*ante* 293).

If the Plaintiff is held to such diligence in this case, it was unnecessary for him to procure the covenant from the Defendant, upon which he has brought suit.—That covenant, I think, has withdrawn the parties from the strict rules applicable to negotiable papers, and placed them upon the plain inartificial principles of justice and common sense; principles, which in the eyes of plain, untutored men, are not obscured by any technicalities or refinements.

The Defendant covenants that he will deliver to the Plaintiff notes of hand, such as he will be responsible for the payment of. With respect to *Blount's* note, which

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was one thus transferred, the Court directed the Jury, that "if they should be of opinion, that it would be lost through *Blount's* insolvency, they were to enquire whether the loss was owing to the laches and want of due diligence on the part of the Plaintiff, or whether it was owing to the insolvency or want of ability in *Blount* to pay. If the former, they ought to find for the Defendant; if it was owing to the insolvency of *Blount*, then they should find for the Plaintiff." Under this charge, (properly given, as I think,) the Jury found a verdict for the Plaintiff. I see nothing in the law or justice of the case, that ought to disturb it.

There is another ground, on which a new trial is moved for; that is, the rejection of the deposition. Why the deposition was not taken by the commissioners, chosen by both parties, does not appear. No reason is assigned, nor is any reason given, why the persons named in the commission, ought not to have taken it. As far as appears, they stood indifferent between the parties.

It is stated farther, that the deposition was not certified under the seals of the commissioners, which the commission directed. If by this is meant, that seals were not affixed to their names, I cannot think the objection a good one, if from their certificates, it appears that they acted in the character of commissioners. When the deposition was taken, it was their duty to return it to Court with the commission under seal; it certainly was not to be sent open, subject to be inspected, or altered by any body. I could wish that this part of the case had been more fully stated. The deposition may be of importance to the Defendant: I think it right that there should be a new trial therefore, on account of its rejection.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

JUNE 1828.

Samuel Scott
v.
Joseph Williams.
} From Davidson.

In questions of slavery or freedom, a presumption of slavery arises from a black complexion, but none from that of a mulatto.

In questions of this kind, the amount of damages is within the discretion of the Jury, and where the Plaintiff's mother, a free woman, had been indented to the Defendant's father, and the Plaintiff given to the Defendant as a slave, a direction to the Jury that they might give substantial damages, was held to be proper.

The Plaintiff declared in trespass for an assault and battery and false imprisonment, the object of the suit being to ascertain whether the Plaintiff, a negro held in slavery by the Defendant, was not, in truth, free. On the trial, the Plaintiff proved that he was the son of *Jemima*, who was the daughter of *Jane Scott*, and the question was, whether *Jane Scott* was a free woman? Contradictory statements of her colour were given, but the Plaintiff introduced an indenture whereby *Jemima* was bound to the father of the Defendant, as a free girl of colour. The Plaintiff was given as a slave, by the Defendant's father to him, and resided with, and served the Defendant from the time of the gift, to that of the trial.

His Honor Judge DANIEL, instructed the Jury, that the first question for them, was, whether *Jane Scott* was a free woman—and in ascertaining that fact, her colour might enter into their consideration. If she was of a black African complexion, they might presume from that fact, that she was a slave; if she was of a yellow complexion, no presumption of slavery arose from her color. His Honor further informed the Jury, that if their verdict should be for the Plaintiff, they might, if they pleased, give him more than nominal damages.

A verdict with substantial damages, was returned for the Plaintiff, and a rule for a new trial being discharged, the Defendant appealed.

Gaston and *Badger*, for the Defendant, cited *Gobu* v. *Gobu*, (*Taylor's Rep.* 164,) *Pleasants* v. *Pleasants*, (2 *Call's Rep* 348).

Hogg, contra.

HALL, Judge.—How far the charge of the Judge in this case will admit of verbal criticism, is not my province to enquire; but that it is plain and perspicuous, so as to be readily comprehended by the Jury, I think there can be but little doubt. They were told, that they *might* consider whether *Jane Scott* was of a black complexion. If she was, they *might* presume from that fact that she was a slave; if she was of a yellow complexion, no presumption of slavery could arise from her color.—This part of the charge has been found fault with in argument, because the Jury were not instructed that they *must* presume that *Jane Scott* was a slave, if she was of a black African complexion. The Judge, to be sure, in more harsh, dictatorial terms, might have done so, but I think the difference would be verbal rather than substantial. When they were told, that no presumption *could* arise from a yellow complexion, they must have understood the Judge to mean, that a presumption of slavery *must* arise from a black one. I think there is nothing solid in this objection. No doubt but that the attention of the Jury was principally directed to the evidence offered, as to the fact of slavery or freedom; and to that evidence, the next objection made to the Judge's charge, makes it necessary to advert. It is argued, that the damages ought to be nominal; that it was an action brought to decide a mere question of property between innocent persons. This may be the case; but the fact is, that the mother of the Plaintiff was indented for a term of years, as a free girl, to the father of the Defendant, and the Plaintiff was put into the possession of the Defendant by the father. It is true, the indentures to *Joseph Williams, sen.* were not conclusive that *Jemima* was a free per-

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Humphreys v. Buie.

son; but it was a circumstance in evidence to the Jury, and as they, under the charge of the Court, have found more than nominal damages, having a discretion to do so, under the circumstances of the case, I think it improper to grant a new trial.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

William Humphreys
v.
John R. Buie.
} From Richmond.

Debt and not Assumpsit, is the proper remedy against the stayor of execution, when the judgment is dormant, and it lies against him without joining the principal.

Whether the seal of the justice is necessary to a valid judgment, Qu? but the want of it, as an objection, is too late after verdict.

The Defendant was warranted in debt, as surety for the stay of execution on a judgment against one *Neill Buie*. After a verdict for the Plaintiff, the Defendant moved in arrest of judgment for the following reasons:

1st. Because debt would not lie against a surety for the stay of execution.

2d. Because of the non joinder of *Neill Buie*.

3d. Because neither the original warrant or the judgment thereon, or the stay of execution, were under the seal of the Justice.

His Honor Judge NORWOOD, arrested the judgment, and the Plaintiff appealed.

Nash, for the Plaintiff, was stopped by the Court.—No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HALL, Judge.—The first reason for arresting the judgment is, that debt will not lie upon the Defendant's liability, as surety for the stay of the execution. Such suretyship is tantamount to a judgment, because execution may issue upon it against the surety, and he is as

much bound as the principal, and for that reason *assumpsit* will not lie against either, in case the judgment became dormant, (*Bain* v. *Hunt*, 3 *Hawks* 572.)

The second objection is, that debt will not lie against the surety, without joining the principal in the action with him.

Laying aside any construction of the act of 1789 (*Rev. ch.* 314) which in its spirit tends to the severance of contracts, it is to be observed, that in the present case, there was not a judgment against two, but a judgment against one, and a liability of another for the same debt as surety. They were both bound, but not *eodem modo*. I therefore think, that an action may be brought against either.

The third reason for arresting the judgment is, that the Justice's seal was not affixed to the warrant, judgment or stay of execution, upon which the action is brought. Whatever force there might have been in this objection, if taken at an earlier stage of the proceedings, it is sufficient now to say that it comes too late. It would be against the order of pleading, and very inconvenient, to suffer an objection to the *evidence* to prevail, after a case has been heard, and decided upon its merits. The reasons in arrest of judgment must be overruled and judgment entered for the Plaintiff.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed and judgment for the Plaintiff.

Milly Williford
v.
Edward Conner.
} From Robeson.

A creditor cannot seize property fraudulently conveyed, unless by virtue of his execution.

TROVER for a colt, and on the trial, the Plaintiff proved a sale and delivery of the property to her by one *Barnes*, and a subsequent conversion by the Defendant.

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The Defendant produced a judgment and execution thereon against *Barnes* and himself in favor of one *Ward*, the date of which was prior to the sale to the Plaintiff, and when that was made, the execution was in force and might have been levied on the property. There were circumstances in proof, tending to impeach the sale to the Plaintiff as fraudulent, but there was no evidence of the manner in which the property came into the Defendant's hands.

His honor Judge NORWOOD, informed the Jury, that if the sale by *Barnes* to the Defendant was fraudulent and void as to creditors, yet it was valid between the parties to it, and that a creditor could not avoid the sale by taking possession of the property fraudulently conveyed, but must levy his execution upon it, and that any other taking, however fraudulent the sale might be, rendered the creditor a trespasser and subjected him to this action.

The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, and the Defendant appealed.

No Counsel appeared in this Court for either party.

HALL, Judge.—The charge of the Judge in this case was certainly correct. The statutes against fraudulent conveyances in favor of creditors, can only be carried into effect by due process of law. If the sale of the colt in this case, was fraudulent as to creditors, *Ward's* execution should have been levied upon it, in the hands of the Plaintiff. But the Defendant had no right to be a judge in his own cause, and seize upon it on that account. The sale between the parties was good and valid, and the Defendant in taking the property, acted as a wrongdoer.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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James S. Battle
v.
Blake & Grey Little, adm'rs of Grey Little.
} From Edgecomb.

What is due diligence is a question of law, and where a guarantor was bound after a due course of law against the principal creditor, neglect to enter a judgment against bail after two *nihils* discharges him.

COVENANT upon a deed executed by the Defendants' intestate, whereby he had assigned several notes to the Plaintiff, and bound himself "for the money due on them provided said *Battle* failed to get it after a due course of law." The breach assigned was "that the Plaintiff had failed to get, after a due course of law, the money called for in a note made by one *John Drummond*," which was one of those assigned by the deed on which the action was brought.

On the trial, the record of a suit against *Drummond* on this bond was introduced, in which, after many continuances and much unnecessary delay, as was contended by the Defendants, a judgment was obtained upon which a *ca. sa.* issued. After a return of *non est inventus*, two writs of *scire facias* were issued, which were both returned *nihil*, when instead of taking judgment against the bail by default, a third was issued, upon which *Drummond* was surrendered in discharge of his bail.

His honor Judge MARTIN, instructed the Jury that the Plaintiff was bound to that diligence which a prudent man would use in his own business, and left it to them to say whether he had used that diligence or not. A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff, and the Defendants appealed.

Gaston, for the Defendants.

Hogg, contra.

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PER CURIAM.—We think whether due diligence had been used in endeavoring to collect the debt from *Drummond*, was a question of law, as it arose in this case.—We also think as the Plaintiff did not take judgment against *Drummond's* bail upon the return of two writs of *sci. fa.* instead of issuing a third, he did not use that diligence which the case required. Let the judgment be reversed, and a new trial granted.

Doe ex dem. of David and William M. Clark
v.
Roe, Samuel Hyman and William R. Bennet.
} From Martin.

In a will, real estate does not pass by the words "all my property and possessions consisting of both personal and perishable" with the further expressions, "that they should pay my debts of it, and the residue to, &c. to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns forever."

EJECTMENT tried before DANIEL, Judge, on the last Fall circuit. The lessors of the Plaintiff claimed by descent from *William Darlet*, the Defendants as his devisees, and the only question was, whether the land of which he died seised, passed by his will.

The case stated, that *Darlet* being seised of a large real, and possessed of a considerable personal estate, made and published his will, duly executed to pass land, which had been proved in the County Court, and was in the following words:

"In the name of God amen. I *William Darlet*, of &c. being weak, &c. but &c. do hereby constitute and appoint this my last will and testament (revoking and disannulling all others heretofore made by me) in manner and form following, viz. Item. I give and bequeath (after the payment of my just debts) all my property and possessions consisting of both personal and perishable, to my much esteemed friends *Samuel Hyman* and *William R. Bennet*, both of &c. and it is my will and desire that they should pay all my debts of it, and the residue to be

equally divided between them, *to have and to hold to them, their heirs* and assigns forever. In testimony whereof I have hereunto set &c." JUNE 1828.

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His honor Judge DANIEL, informed the Jury that the lands of the testator did not pass by the will, but descended to his heirs. A verdict was returned for the lessors of the Plaintiff, and the Defendants appealed.

Gaston, for the Defendants, cited *Haxtep* v. *Brooman*, (1 *Bro. Ch. Rep.* 437.) *Doe* v. *Langland*, (14 *East.* 371). He distinguished this case from that of *Roe ex dem. of Helling* v. *Feud*, (2 *New. Rep.* 214,) because in that case there was no provision applicable to real estate—no clause indicating an intention in the testator to dispose of it.—Here both of these circumstances exist; In that case the words "*heirs and assigns*" did not occur, here they do, there it seemed that the testator had nothing in view but personal estate, here his words comprehend all kinds of property. There the debts and legacies were to be paid by the executors in their character of executors, there was no charge of them upon the estate, while here the debts were charged upon the property.

Hogg & Badger on the other side, were stopped by the Court.

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—The only question in this case is, whether by the words "all my property & possessions, consisting of both personal and perishable," given to the Defendants, with the further expressions, "that they should pay my debts out of it, and the residue to be equally divided between them, to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns forever," the lands of the testator passed. If these words were sufficient to pass them, a verdict and judgment should have been entered for the Defendants; if not, the Plaintiffs as heirs at law, are entitled to recover. That the words property, possessions, or estate are sufficient, if not qualified by the context to bear a narrower signification, to carry real

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estate, is well settled by many decisions; but it is otherwise, if it appear from the context, that personal estate only was in the contemplation of the testator. It is argued for the Defendants, that the testator meant, by the words "both personal and perishable," as referred to "property and possessions," two distinct kinds of property, viz. real and personal; for that personal property is in its nature perishable, and therefore the last word would be redundant and unmeaning, if not confined to personal property. It is strictly speaking true, that all personal property is perishable, but our acts of assembly have often mentioned personal property, as perishable and unperishable, and have rendered the terms familiar in common use. Thus the act of 1723, *ch.* 15, empowers the executor to sell, by the directions of the Court, so many of the *unperishable* goods, as will pay and satisfy the debts; and the act of 1762, (*Rev. ch.* 69.) directs the guardian to dispose of such goods and chattels of the ward, as may be liable to perish, consume or be the worse for keeping. There is a similar division of personal property in the civil law. A book, or a horse is called inconsumable, in opposition to corn, wine, money and those things which perish, or are parted with in the use.

The case before us would resemble the case of *Doe ex dem. of Wall* v. *Langland*, cited from 14 *East.* 371, provided the words of the will had been property and possessions, personal and perishable; for then, according to the principle of that case, the words "possessions personal and perishable," might have been taken cumulatively, and not as descriptive of the kind of property the testator intended to give. The words in that case were "property, goods and chattels," and the Court said they would not read the will "property, namely, or viz. goods and chattels;" but they would consider the word property as unrestricted, and efficient to carry the real estate. The plain difference between the cases is, that here the testator declares by the words "consisting of"

what he meant by property and possessions, and leaves no ground for a different construction. There are many other words, which if standing uncontrolled, or no specification made that personal property alone was meant by them, will be sufficient to pass real estate, as "all I am worth." (*Haxtep* v. *Brooman*, 1 *Bro. Ch. Rep.* 437.) So "all that I posses both in doors and out of doors." (*Tolar* v. *Tolar*, 3 *Hawks*, 74). But even the word *estate*, which by itself is the most comprehensive one that can be used, will when coupled with other words indicative of personal property, be so restrained. (*Cliffe* v. *Gibbons*, 2 *Ld. Raymond*, 1324). Where there was a devise of the residue of *effects*, after a partial disposition of real and personal estate, it was held not to carry real effects. (*Camfield* v. *Gilbert*, 3 *East.* 516). The case of *Timewell* v. *Perkins*, (2 *Atk.* 102,) bears a strong resemblance to the one before us. The words of the will were "all my freehold lands in the tenure of the widow *L*, and the residue of my estate *consisting* in ready money, jewels, leases, mortgages, &c. or in any other thing wheresoever or whatsoever, I give to *A. B.* or her assigns forever." It was held that the residue of the real estate did not pass to *A. B.* because the word *estate* is expressly confined to personals. In conformity with these authorities, the case of *Harris* v. *Mills* was decided in this Court. There the testator gave and bequeathed to his son *Hood Harris*, and his four daughters who lived with him, all the rest of his estate, *consisting* of various articles too tedious to mention. (1 *Law Repos.* 536).

The intention of the testator to devise his land is argued from the words "to have and to hold, to them, their heirs and assigns forever," being applicable to lands.—They are so, but there is nothing to show that he was aware of it, for his want of information on such a subject is apparent from the whole will. Upon the supposition that he intended to pass land, it cannot be inferred that he knew the import of those terms, when he knew

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not the proper terms to devise real estate. It is also said, that direction to pay the debts out of *it*, is indicative of his intention; but that pronoun is properly applicable to the bulk of the things bequeathed, as if he had said, to be paid out of my personal and perishable property. Taking then the rule to be clear, that the heirs at law are not to be disinherited, unless the testator's intention to do so can be collected from the words of the will, which must convey a necessary implication, I cannot doubt that the judgment should be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Benjamin H. Martin
v.
John W. Williams ad'mr. of Alexander Latham,
} From Beaufort.

An agent, who has given a receipt for a judgment and collected the amount of it, may be subjected in Assumpsit for money had and received, without producing the judgment on the trial.

The Plaintiff declared in Assumpsit for money had and received, and on the trial, produced an accountable receipt given to him by the Defendant's intestate, for a Justice's judgment against one *Bowen*. He then proved by one *Judkins*, that the amount of the judgment had been collected from *Bowen*, and paid to the Defendant's intestate. The witness was asked what had become of the judgment, and answered that it had been delivered to *Bowen*. The Plaintiff's Counsel admitted that he could not produce the judgment, and that no attempt had been made to enable him to do so; whereupon his honor Judge STRANGE, ruled that *Judkins'* testimony could not go to the Jury in the absence of the judgment, unless that ab-

sence was accounted for, and directed a nonsuit, from which the Plaintiff appealed. JUNE 1828.

Tyer v. Harper.

Hogg, for the Plaintiff.

Gaston, contra.

PER CURIAM.—The substantial justice of the case is, that the Defendant's intestate received the money claimed by the Plaintiff, and received it to his use; it was also received on account of the judgment against *Bowen*, a fact which could not be more satisfactorily established by the production of the judgment. But we cannot be ignorant of a very prevailing custom in the country, of surrendering magistrates' judgments to the debtor, upon their being paid; and in most cases it would be impossible ever to obtain possession of them again. Besides the Defendant ought not to insist upon the production of it, after he had acknowledged the receipt of it, and must consequently have put it into *Judkins'* possession.

Let the judgment below be reversed.

James Tyer
v.
Jesse Harper.
} From Randolph.

Single magistrates have jurisdiction for balances due upon executed contracts, for which Debt or Indebitatus Assumpsit will lie, but they cannot give damages for the breach of an executory contract.

Where the Defendant covenanted to pay a certain price per hundred for carrying goods and to deliver a certain quantity, but delivered less; it was held, that a Justice of the Peace had no jurisdiction as to that part of the contract which had not been performed.

The Plaintiff warranted the Defendant for work and labor in carrying goods from Petersburg to Randolph county, and on the trial a letter from the Defendant to the Plaintiff was read, of which the following are the material parts:

"It is understood that I am to furnish you with five "thousand weight and pay you one dollar and fifty cents

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"per hundred, &c. All that remains for me to say, is "on the subject of the time for you to be in Petersburg; "Mr. H. and myself have set from the 1st of October to "the 5th, (1823,) for our goods to be landed there, and "I shall expect you there at that time. We allow five "days for fear of some disappointment."

The Plaintiff then proved that he, in pursuance of these instructions went to Petersburg with two waggons where he arrived on the 3d of October, 1823, and waited until the 7th, when the Defendant's agent refused to pay his expenses or to give him more than 1500lbs. to bring to Randolph, with which he left Petersburg, although he could have carried 6,000. A payment of thirty-six dollars was admitted by the Plaintiff.

The Counsel for the Defendant objected that the case was not of a kind over which a single Magistrate had jurisdiction, but his honor Judge NORWOOD overruled the objection, and instructed the Jury that the Plaintiff was entitled to a verdict, which being returned accordingly, the Defendant appealed.

Nash, for the Defendant.

Winston, contra.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—This is a warrant brought to recover the price of waggoning merchandize from Petersburg, according to a contract contained in a letter from the Defendant to the Plaintiff, in which the Defendant undertakes to furnish the Plaintiff with 5000lbs. at a stipulated price per hundred. The Defendant proceeded to the place, together with another waggon, which he had hired, and after several days detention, was furnished with only 1500lbs. being about a fourth of the amount the waggons could have brought with convenience. For the wagonage of the goods actually brought, the Defendant has overpaid the Plaintiff, but as the latter has sustained damage, and been put to expense, by not being supplied with the quantity he had prepared to

bring, he is manifestly entitled in justice to compensation for his loss. The only question is, can he recover it in this form, or must he resort to an action. An inspection of all the acts, conferring jurisdiction on Justices out of Court, shows that the Legislature designed only, that they might take cognizance of such matters as were liquidated between the parties, or might be reduced to certainty by some standard furnished by them, or one of familiar application. It is remarkable that in the first act of 1777, down to the act of 1794, the nature of the jurisdiction, in regard to money contracts, is described by the same words, "all debts and demands, (of so many pounds and under,) where the balance due on any specialty, contract, note or agreement, or for goods, wares or merchandize sold and delivered, or for work and labor done." All the acts contemplate, that upon such debts and demands, there must be a balance due, whether it arises from a specialty, contract, note, agreement, or the other enumerated causes of action. The evident meaning was, to comprehend two classes of cases; such as the action of debt would have lain for, before its disuse as to simple contracts; that is for a sum of money due by certain and express agreement, where the amount is specific, and does not depend on any subsequent valuation to settle it; in which case the action of debt operates as a specific execution of the contract, whether the debt arise by specialty, or a verbal agreement to pay a certain price for a certain parcel of goods.—Secondly, that class of cases, which could not be specifically performed, because the price of the goods, or the value of the labor, was not previously ascertained, but of which an estimate might be formed, near enough to mark the demand, as within the jurisdiction—those cases in short, for which Indebitatus Assumpsit is brought, to recover damages for the non-performance of the contract. But there are cases of "specialty, contract and agreement," by the violation of which a man may be in-

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jured to an amount, perhaps less than the jurisdiction of the Justice, who is nevertheless without the power to afford him redress. If a man covenants to go to a certain place by such a day, or not to exercise a trade at a particular place, and is not at the place at the time appointed, or carries on his trade at the restricted place, these are breaches of his covenant, and may perhaps be to the loss of the covenantee. So in the case of a simple contract or agreement, if a builder undertakes to build a house for A within a time limited, and fails to do it, A can recover no satisfaction before a magistrate, for the injury sustained by such delay; nor can the covenantees in the cases first put. The reason is plain, for although there is a demand, there is no balance due, nor any certain rule or fixed standard, by which alone the policy of our law will allow an individual to measure the injury sustained; it is a fit subject for the communication of many minds, in short for the determination of a Jury.— A strong legislative exposition of these acts is furnished by the act of 1794, (*Rev. ch.* 414,) by which jurisdiction is first given to magistrates, of contracts for specific articles. The value of all articles, at the time they ought to have been delivered was of easy ascertainment; the creditor could assert beforehand the amount due him upon the contract, at least within a small sum. Yet it had been a question, which for time immemorial was submitted to a Jury; such is our habitual reverence for that institution, that though the summary jurisdiction is convenient to the country, the transfer of it was late and reluctant. What should be the proper estimate of damages in this case, is a subject peculiarly fit for the consideration of a Jury. The magistrate has allowed the amount of what would have been the carriage of 5000lbs. deducting the $36, paid by the Defendant; whereas the labor and risk of returning with 1500lbs. was less than with 5000lbs. On the other hand, it may be thought that the Plaintiff is entitled to an allowance by way of demurrage, for the

time he was detained in Petersburg. This is mentioned to show the uncertainty of the rule, by which damages are to be estimated. The result of the whole is, that in my opinion, the demand on this warrant is not within a single magistrate's jurisdiction, and that the judgment should be reversed, and a new trial granted.

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Bell v. Ballance.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

Lovett Bell
v.
Thomas Ballance,
} From Beaufort.

Goods were sold to be paid for in notes, the vendee agreeing to take them back if not good. It was held,

1st. That the insolvency of the payers authorised the vendor to return them immediately, and that upon tender and refusal, he was remitted to his contract for goods sold.

2d. That a Justice of the Peace had jurisdiction, notwithstanding the guarantee.

3d. That the tender was good, although the vendor had parted with the notes, and got possession of them solely for the purpose of making the tender, under an engagement to return them again.

This was a warrant, in which "the sum of twenty-five dollars due by account, to his damage ten dollars" was claimed by the Plaintiff.

On the trial, it appeared that one *Bishop*, as agent for the Plaintiff, sold to the Defendant a rifle, for twenty-five dollars, who paid for it in a note made by *John Warner*, *Joseph Warner*, and *Anthony Oneal*, payable to one *Farris*, and also in a judgment against one *Robert McKay*, and agreed to take them back in case they could not be collected, and either return the rifle or pay the Plaintiff twenty-five dollars. It was proved that at the time of the bargain, both the *Warners* were dead, and their estates insolvent—that *Oneal* had moved away, and had not been heard of for some years—and that *McKay* was entirely insolvent. One *Carrow* proved a tender of the

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notes and judgment by the Plaintiff to the Defendant, before the warrant was issued, when the Defendant refused to take them, affirming that he had dealt with *Bishop*, and had nothing to say to the Plaintiff. Another witness, one *Colson*, proved that the Plaintiff had passed the judgment against *McKay* to him—that it was in his possession the day the tender was made, and that the Plaintiff, on that day, applied to him for it, and upon receiving it gave him an acknowledgement binding himself to return it to him.

His honor Judge DONNELL charged the Jury, that in order to entitle the Plaintiff to recover, he must either demand payment of the parties to the note and judgment, or show a reasonable cause to excuse it, and that he must also prove a tender of the notes and judgment to the Defendant. His honor informed the Jury that the death, or insolvency of the parties to the note and judgment, was a sufficient reason for not applying to them; and that if they believed the witness *Carrow*, a sufficient tender in law had been made by the Plaintiff, and it was a matter of indifference in what relation the Plaintiff stood to the witness *Colson*, or what were his liabilities to him, provided he had the note and judgment ready to deliver to the Defendant, if he would accept them.

A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff, and the Counsel for the Defendant moved for a new trial, on the ground of misdirection; which being refused, a motion was then made in arrest of judgment, the subject matter of the suit not being within the jurisdiction of a single Justice of the Peace; which being refused, and judgment rendered upon the verdict, the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Defendant, cited *Parker* v. *Elding*, (1 *East*. 358—*Dwyer* v. *Cutler*, *Ante* 312—*Whitlock* v. *Van Ness*, 9 *Johns Rep*. 409—*Read* v. *Cook and Caldwell*, 15 *Johns. Rep*. 241—*Pierce* v. *Drake*, *Do*. 475.)

Gaston, contra, referred to *Read* v. *Goldring*. (2 *Maule and Selwyn*, 85.)

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The warrant in this case states a demand, which in amount, is within the jurisdiction of a magistrate, and this ought to appear in every case; but if upon the evidence, the subject matter is shown to be without his jurisdiction, the objection may be availed of at any time. The objections raised to the Plaintiff's recovery are, that his action for the sale of the rifle is extinguished, and his remedy is on the undertaking to take back the notes. I apprehend the rule to be, that where a particular mode of payment is agreed on, which is not complied with, the Plaintiffs may sue on the original contract of sale, after the term of credit expired; as in the case of *Brooke* and others against *White*—there goods were sold on two months credit, to be paid for by a bill at twelve months; and the goods not being paid for after the expiration of fourteen months, the vendor recovered in an action for goods sold and delivered.—It was insisted in that case, that the Plaintiffs ought to have declared upon a special contract, for not having given the bill agreed upon; for that where any thing is agreed to be done besides the mere payment of money, the contract is not a sale, but a special agreement. But the Court said, that if the bill be not given, he may bring an action on the special contract, because he is deprived of the particular security agreed upon; but when the whole time is expired, and no bill has been given, he may bring an action for the money which is then due. After the expiration of the period of credit, it is of no use to give the bill, for the party is then entitled to receive his money. (1 *N. Rep.* 330.) The qualified mode of payment being introduced for the benefit of the purchaser, while the contract is executory, an action must be brought on the special agreement; when it is executed, an action may be brought for the price of the goods. I understand the substance of the contract between these parties to have been, that the Defendant bought a rifle from the Plaintiff for twenty-five dollars, for which he

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agreed to give him a note of *Warner's* and *Oneal's* originally payable to *Farris*, together with a small judgment against *McKay*. These papers the Defendant promised to take back if they were not good, and restore the rifle or pay the money. Whenever therefore, the Plaintiff was able to show that the papers were not good, he might tender them to the Defendant, and bring an action for the money. Some cases have been cited for the Defendant, to establish the point of extinguishment of the action for the price of the rifle; but on a careful examination of them, they all appear to me to be decided on a distinct ground. The case of *Whitlock* v. *Van Ness*, (9 *Johns.* 409,) presented the question, whether the seller of a horse, agreeing to receive the note of a third person payable in six months for the price, and the note not being paid, can recover against the purchaser. It was decided that he could not, because the circumstances of the case show, that the seller considered himself as taking the note at his own risk, and the purchaser not endorsing it or guarantying it, clearly declined pledging his own responsibility. The opinion given is entirely consistent with the Plaintiff's right to recover on the original sale, if the note had been taken at the risk of the purchaser, and had not been paid. The case of *Breed* v. *Cook & Caldwell*, turns on the same principles, and shows that if on the sale of the goods, the vendee delivers to the vendor the promissory note of a third person, which he refuses to endorse, it is to be considered as payment, and the vendor cannot afterwards resort to the vendee, unless the note was forged, or there was fraud or misrepresentation on his part, as to the solvency of the maker. (15 *Johns.* 241.) The only question in the case was whether the note was a payment, and it being held to be so, the contract of course was at an end; no action of any kind could be brought. But if the note had *not been* a payment, the Plaintiffs might have recovered for the property sold. The other case cited of *Pierce* v. *Drake*,

(15 *Johns.* 475,) proves only that if the vendor of goods is induced to take the promissory note of a third person as a payment, by a fraudulent representation of the solvency of that person, the note is no satisfaction, and he may maintain an action against the purchaser, for the price of the goods. If the Plaintiff in this case had taken the note and judgment at his own risk, this action would not have been sustainable, for the contract then would have been extinguished by performance.

The magistrate then had jurisdiction of the claim, and the nature of the enquiries necessary to be entered into, as a defence to the claim, cannot oust that jurisdiction. For though it has been held, and I think rightly, that the act giving jurisdiction to the magistrates excludes cases, which sound in damages for the breach of a special agreement, yet if they have the jurisdiction of the principal subject of the cause, it must draw after it the incidental matters of defence. A different principle would lead to the grossest injustice, by giving to Plaintiffs, advantages which they would not have, if they had brought a suit. In this view, the Defendant could not set off a judgment recovered in Court, against a debt claimed by warrant, because the Justice could not take cognizance of a sum so large. Or suppose the parties had submitted all matters in dispute to arbitration, and the submission was by bond, the penalty of which exceeded the magistrate's jurisdiction, if the award had found a sum due to the Defendant, after crediting the Plaintiff's account it would be unjust to allow the Plaintiff to recover in the face of the award. On this part of the case, nothing can be added to what was said by Judge HENDERSON, in the *State* v. *Alexander*. "If it be admitted, that the Justice has jurisdiction over this case, he must of necessity, have power of examining every question which would form a defence." (4 *Hawks*, 186).

As to the charge of the Court, on the subject of diligence, it appears to me to have been highly favorable to

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the Defendant, and requiring more from the Plaintiff, than the circumstances of the case, duly considered, could warrant. The Defendant agreed to take the papers back if they were not good, and as two of the parties to the note were certainly dead, and the other probably so, or had removed away—the party to the judgment insolvent, as well as the parties to the note when it was given, it would have been sufficient to have ascertained these facts by a proper enquiry, and then to have returned the papers in a much shorter time than the Plaintiff took. No injury or loss could arise to the Defendant by the act of the Plaintiff, for the papers were of no value, when he received them.

In relation to that part of the charge, which is connected with the alleged tender, and the law arising from *Carrow's* evidence; I think it was correct, since the Defendant disavowed having any thing to do with the Plaintiff, when asked to take back the papers. The case of *Read* v. *Goldring*, (2 *M. & S.* 85,) is much in point. Nor can I perceive any incorrectness in the tender of the judgment, if made, and this the Jury have decided upon, for it was authorized by *Colson* delivering it to the Plaintiffs. I am of opinion that the judgment should be affirmed.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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The President and Directors of the State Bank
v.
John Hinton and Samuel C. Brame. } From Franklin.

The attachment laws are to be strictly construed, and the Plaintiff must perform all the conditions required, to entitle him to the benefit of them. Hence he must not only give bond and make affidavit, but must see that they are returned.

A plea is not bad for duplicity, which alleges several facts dependent upon each other, tending to one point and triable upon one issue. Therefore a plea in abatement to an attachment, averring that a bond and affidavit were not taken or returned, is good upon general demurrer. And it seems that an averment, that no bond, &c. were taken and *the said bond &c. so taken*, were not returned, is equivalent to an averment that they were not taken and returned, and that the repugnancy does not vitiate.

But the Plaintiff having made affidavit and given bond, which the Justice neglected to return, had leave to withdraw his demurrer and file them *nunc pro tunc*.

This was an original attachment commenced in the County Court. The Defendants filed special bail and pleaded in abatement as follows:

"And the said *J. H.* and *S. C. B.* in their own proper persons, "come and defend the wrong and injury which, &c. and pray judg- "ment of the said original attachment of the said President, &c. be- "cause they say that the Justice of the Peace of the County, &c. who "granted the said original attachment, did not before granting the "same, to-wit, on or before &c. take bond and security of the said "President, &c. for whom the said attachment was issued, or of their "attorney, or agent, or factor, or any person whatsoever payable to "them the said *J. H.* and *S. C. B.* in double the sum of which com- "plaint is made, to-wit, in the sum of, &c. besides interest &c. for "satisfying all costs which shall be awarded to them, the said *J. H.* "and *S. C. B.* in case the President, &c. shall be cast in this suit, "and all damages which shall be recovered against the said Presi- "dent, &c. in any suit or suits which may be brought against them "for wrongfully suing out the said attachment, and *return the said* "*bond so taken, together with the affidavit of the said President, &c* or "of their attorney &c. subscribed by them or him, with their or his "proper name, to the Court of Pleas, &c. to which the said original "attachment was returnable, to wit, to the Court of &c. and this the

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"said *J. H.* and *S. C. B.* are ready to verify. Wherefore, because "the said original attachment has been issued without bond and affi- "davit, taken and returned as aforesaid—they the said *J. H.* and *S.* "*C. B.* pray judgment of the original attachment, and that the same "may be quashed."

To this plea the Plaintiffs demurred generally, and the demurrer being overruled, the Plaintiff appealed to the Superior Court. On the last Circuit, his honor Judge MARTIN, at the request of the Counsel on both sides, *pro forma*, affirmed the judgment, and the Plaintiffs appealed.

Badger, for the Plaintiffs.

1st. The plea is bad for duplicity. It alleges first that the bond and affidavit was not taken. Secondly, that they were not returned. These are distinct facts, either of which is sufficient to sustain the plea. The Plaintiff cannot learn from the plea which fact is relied on, and more certainty is required in a plea in abatement than in bar. (*Co. Litt.* 303 *a.*—*Com. Dig. Abatement I.* 2—*Ricant* v. *Tomlin*, 3 *Lev.* 67—1 *Chitty's Pleadings*, 446—7, 526—*Bacon's Ab. Pleas R.* 2).

2d. The plea is bad for repugnance; it alleges that the bond was not taken, and that *the said bond so taken* was not returned. The error consists in following the very words of the act. But one of the facts alleged, should have been stated in the plea. (*Service* v. *Hurmance*, 2 *Johns. R.* 96—*Cooper* v. *Hurmance*, 3 *Johns. R.* 315—*Daning* v. *Owen*, 14 *Mass. R.* 157—*More* v. *Parker*, 3 *Mass. Rep.* 310).

3d. The Plaintiffs may avail themselves of those objections on general demurrer. (*Walden* v. *Holman*, *Ld. Ray.* 1015—*Tidd's Practice*, 4*th edition*, 885—1 *Chitty on Plead.* 456—*Buddle* v. *Wilson*, 6 *T. R.* 369—*Clifford* v. *Coney*, 1 *Mass.* 495).

W. H. Haywood, for the Defendants.

1. The plea is not *repugnant*—the words "*so taken*" refer not to the bond *as* taken in fact, but they refer to

to the peculiar description of the manner in which the bond is required to be taken, to-wit, the penalty, conditions, &c.

Or "*so taken*" may be rejected as *surplusage* which is never retained to make pleadings repugnant—unless by such unnecessary allegations the party admits that, which shews he has no cause of action, or defence. (1 *Chitty on Pleadings*, 282-4—*Ibid.* 524—*Co. Litt.* 303 *b.* 10 *East* 142).

This plea, though it be in abatement, is entitled to a fair construction, especially as it is a defence given by act of Assembly, and hence it cannot be considered like ordinary pleas in abatement as *odious*. (*Rev p.* 290, *s.* 29) The plea pursues the very words of the act. (*Ibid.*)

2. There is no *duplicity* in the plea. (*Co. Litt* 304 *a. Chitty on Plead.* 512—4 *Bacon's Abridg. Tit. Misnomer, F. page*—5 *Bacon's Abr. page* 446—*Ashton* v. *Sherman, L. Ray.* 263—*Otis* v. *Blake*, 6 *Mass Rep.* 336).

3. Duplicity in a *plea* to the *writ* is no fault. (*Co. Lit.* 304 *a.*—1 *Bacon's Abr. Tit. Abatement* 1—*Tresilian* v. *Slocumb, Carthew's Rep.* 8, 9, cited by *Chitty's Pl.* 446).

4. It is conceded that the statute 27 *Eliz. c*, 5, and 4 *Ann ch.* 16, apply only to pleas in *bar*. But *duplicity* in pleadings at the *common law* could be excepted to, only upon *special demurrer*. (*Tidd's Practice* 647, 648—*Chitty on Pleadings*, 640—*Anonymous*, 3 *Salk.* 122).

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The attachment law introduced a mode of proceeding, unknown to the common law, and may operate injuriously in cases where the Defendants reside in other governments, and obtain no notice of its issuing. The case therefore furnishes additional reasons for the application of the rule of common law, that the provisions of such statutes shall be strictly pursued, and be so construed, as to enforce on the Plaintiff a compliance with those requisites, which are provided for the security of the Defendant. The making affidavit

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and giving bond are conditions precedent to granting the attachment; and returning the bond and affidavit to Court, are of consequence to the Defendant, to enable him to see how far the Plaintiff has entitled himself to the attachment, and to obtain a compensation against him, if it be wrongfully sued. Indeed there is no law in the statute book, which more imperiously demands a strict construction; for the property of an absentee may be all sold upon an attachment wrongfully sued out, before he is apprised of the proceeding, and if then he should discover that no bond and affidavit were taken and returned, his remedy must be at best very imperfect. I take it therefore, that the law, having imposed on the Plaintiffs the duty of giving bond, and seeing that it is returned with the affidavit to Court, has made these three facts one condition, on which alone the Plaintiffs can issue an attachment, and I apprehend that it will appear that separating them for the purpose of pleading, will lead to a construction which destroys the text of the act, and tends to the elusion of its provisions.

Upon the demurrer to the plea of abatement, the Plaintiff has first objected to it, on the score of duplicity.—The proposition is this, that it is not allowable to plead several facts, either of which, if true, would be sufficient to abate the attachment. But this is correct in this sense only, that is, when the matters pleaded are distinct and unconnected with each other. This is shown by the cases cited of the two outlawries, or the two excommunications; they have no connexion with each other, and either is sufficient to abate the action. (*Bacon's Ab. title Abatement P.*) It is shown still more decisively, in the cases cited from 2 and 3 *Johns.* in the first of which the Defendant pleaded a discharge under the act of insolvency; the Plaintiff replied, setting forth all the grounds on which the discharge is made void by the act, in the words of the act. On demurrer the replication was held to be bad, because the Plaintiff had not specified the particu-

lar fraud, on which he meant to rely. It was not necessary that all the grounds of fraud should concur to avoid the discharge, for the act had given that effect to each of them severally. So in the other case, to a similar plea, the Plaintiff replied three distinct and independent grounds to avoid the discharge, which would require several distinct points to be put in issue. These replications were very properly held to be defective, on account of duplicity. I have examined all the other cases cited, to which I have access, and they all proceed upon the same ground, that the facts relied upon are separate and independent of each other, and that each, if true, would form a good defence. This is a sound rule of pleading, for it would be embarrassing to have as many issues, as there were facts relied upon, when the trial of one would decide the question.

But the rule is very different, where the several facts pleaded have a dependence on each other—where the whole form one point or one defence. Thus it is laid down, "if a man allege several matters, the one not having any dependence on the other, the plea is accounted double; but if they be mutually depending on each other, then it is accounted as only single." (*Sys. of Pl.* 198). So it is said, that "if one plea contain divers matters in it, upon which an issue may be taken, yet this plea is not double, if it could not have been good without alleging those matters in it. For although the law does not allow captious pleas, yet it will not delay the Defendant to plead all such matters, that the case affords for his just defence." *Ibid.*

I cannot understand that there is any limitation to the number of facts, a man may rely upon in his plea, if they all converge to one point, and may be tried upon one issue. If a man is sued upon an obligation, he may plead that he was illiterate, that it was falsely read to him, besides that it was delivered as an *escrow*, and the con-

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ditions not performed. All these do not make his plea double, for they may be tried on one issue, *non est factum*. (*Sys. of Pl.* 200). The position is confirmed and illustrated by the modern cases. Thus in *Robinson* v. *Rayley*, (1 *Burr.* 316.) the Defendant in trespass pleaded a right in common for his cattle, *levant* and *couchant*. The Plaintiff replied that they were not his own commonable cattle, *levant* and *couchant*. The Defendant demurred specially, because the replication was multifarious; but the Court held the replication good, the rule being not that issue must be joined on a single fact, but on a single point, and that it was not necessary that this single point should consist only of a single fact. And in a case which approaches nearly to this in principle, the Defendant demurred to the replication, assigning for cause, that the Plaintiff, by the replication, had attempted to put in issue three distinct facts, the act of bankruptcy, the trading and the petitioning creditor's debt. The Court held that these three facts connected together constituted but one entire proposition, and that the replication was good. (*Steph. on Pl.*) 274). In truth, it is difficult to find a special plea, that is not made up of a variety of facts, all however tending to and making parts of the same point of defence.

The point in controversy here is, whether the Plaintiff has entitled himself to the attachment. The Defendant says he has not, because no bond and affidavit are taken and returned. If these facts are traversed in the replication, and are found in favor of the Plaintiff, he has done all that the law required, and it will appear to the Court that he is entitled to the attachment. There is no other way of showing it to the Court, and a different rule of pleading would have a manifest tendency to dispense with those safeguards, which the act has placed around the property of absentees. It appears to me that the Defendant is clearly entitled to call on the Plaintiff

to show, that he has done all the law requires to entitle him. The consequences of a different doctrine may be of a most serious kind to Defendants so situated. Suppose the Defendant selects one fact, viz. that no affidavit has been returned to Court, and the Plaintiff takes issue upon it, and it is found against the Defendant, the Jury must assess damages, and the judgment is peremptory that the Plaintiff recover. Yet in such case, no bond may have been filed; the attachment may have been sued out most injuriously, and the Defendant's property taken from him under colour of law, without the chance of redress. Let the consequences be traced, likewise upon the supposition, that the Defendant relies upon the plea that no bond has been given and returned, which is found against him, although the affidavit be filed.

In whatever light I see this question, it seems to me, that the taking the bond and its return with the affidavit, constitute one point or qualification for the Plaintiff to prosecute the attachment, that if he was sued for suing out the attachment maliciously, he would be bound to aver them, inasmuch as the act has connected them together.

As to the repugnancy, in whatever form the plea has been drawn, it is quite evident that the pleader meant to present the objection furnished by the act of 1777, that a bond had not been taken and returned—that the Justice did not take a bond, and the bond *which the act requires to be so taken*, was not returned. It is the separating the taking of a bond from the return of it, that has created the apparent incongruity; for if the plea had simply stated that no bond was taken and returned, it would have been unexceptionable. Comparing the plea with the act of Assembly, no doubt can exist of the object and design of it. On the whole, we think the justice of the case may be obtained, by giving the Plaintiff leave to withdraw the demurrer, and file the bond *nunc pro tunc*. If the bond

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and affidavit, heretofore taken,* be not returned, the demurrer must be overruled.

PER CURIAM.—Let the Plaintiff withdraw his demurrer and file his bond and affidavit *nunc pro tunc*.

*It was stated in argument and not denied, that the Plaintiffs had made affidavit and given bond, but the Justice of the Peace had neglected to return them.

Thomas Shewell
v.
Ambrose Knox.
} From Chowan.

Per TAYLOR and HENDERSON, Judges.—A general letter of credit addressed to no particular individual, is not a guarantee, but a proposal for one, and notice of an advance on the faith of it must be given to the guarantor.

Per HALL, Judge.—Such a letter is an absolute guarantee, and notice of an advance is unnecessary to charge the guarantor.

What degree of diligence a creditor must use to bind a guarantor, Qu? But loss from neglect on his part is a matter of defence for the guarantor, and if not shown by him in the trial, a new trial will not be granted simply because indulgence has been shown to the principal debtor.

The Plaintiff declared in Assumpsit, and on the trial on the Fall Circuit of 1826, read the following letter:

"*William G. Burgess* and *Josiah Jordan*, of Elizabeth City, being desirous of entering into the commercial business, and *W. G. Burgess*, for the purpose of purchasing goods for the said concern, is about going to the North, the subscribers having been long acquainted with them, and having full faith in their honesty and integrity, recommend them as entitled to the confidence of merchants in Philadelphia, and are willing to hold themselves responsible for the payment of purchases made at this time, not exceeding the amount of two thousand dollars.

"WILL. T. MUSE.
"AMBROSE KNOX.

"*This the 30th September*, 1822."

He then proved that in the month of October, 1822, in consequence of this letter, he furnished *Burgess* with goods to the amount of 2,740 dollars, at six months credit. The following letter was then put in and read by the Plaintiff:

"*Elizabeth City*, 18*th September*, 1823.

"MR. THOMAS SHEWELL.

"SIR:—Your letter addressed to *William T. Muse* and myself, informing us of the non-payment of the debt contracted with you by *Burgess* and *Jordan* of this place, so far as we are bound on our letter of credit given them sometime in the fall of 1822, was received by *Mr. Muse*, who having since died, I am at this moment, without any correct information, as to the amount of your claim against the said *B.* and *J.* *Mr. Burgess* expects to be in Philadelphia in a very short time, and I understand the house has made a shipment of wheat to your place, which I calculate is intended for the liquidation of the debt for which the late *Mr. Muse* and myself are responsible.—The object of this letter is to request of you to use your best endeavors to obtain a full payment from *Mr. B.* for your claim against *B.* and *J.* or in failure thereof immediately to transmit to some Attorney here, the amount and voucher of your claim, with directions to proceed on the receipt thereof to the enforcing of payment. My becoming responsible from motives of friendship to *Mr. Jordan* of said firm, and hearing that a dissolution of partnership will take place, besides being very desirous of having their affairs, so far as I am responsible, settled, causes this request.

"I have also understood that a shipment of wheat has been made by them to New-York; the proceeds of which I doubt not are now ready for their disposal, and perhaps you may make an arrangement with *Mr. B.* to obtain payment for your whole claim. Your immediate and particular attention will much oblige,

"Yours respectfully,

"AMBROSE KNOX."

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Burgess was examined by the Defendant, and proved, that in the Fall of 1823, he shipped a quantity of wheat to New-York and Philadelphia, nearly sufficient in amount to discharge the debt due the Plaintiff—that directly after the shipment he went to the North, and called upon the Plaintiff in Philadelphia, who informed him that his sureties had requested an action might be brought against him—that he stated to the Plaintiff the shipment of wheat, and the utter impossibility of his doing any thing until its arrival, or until it was lost, so as to enable him to call upon the underwriters—that he went on to New-York, where he was arrested at the suit of the Plaintiff, and was discharged upon delivering orders to the consignees of the wheat, to pay the nett proceeds of it to the Plaintiff—that no directions were asked for by the Plaintiff, or given by him, as to the application of those proceeds—that the wheat turned out to be damaged, and only netted 400 dollars, which was paid to the Plaintiff, and that in the ensuing fall or winter, the copartnership of *Burgess* and *Jordan* became insolvent.

His Honor Judge PAXTON charged the Jury, that from the terms of the letter of guarantee, the Plaintiff ought to have given notice to the Defendant, that he held him responsible upon the guarantee. His honor left it to them to say whether such notice had been given, and told them that if they inferred it from the letter of the Defendant of September 18th, 1823, they ought to find for the Plaintiff, as the notice was in law reasonable.

A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff, and the Defendant appealed.

Gaston, for the Defendant,

I. The Judge erred in instructing the Jury, that if they could infer from the letter of *Knox*, that the Plaintiff had given notice to *Muse* and *Knox*, that he held them responsible as guarantees, they ought to find for the Plaintiff.

The letter of *Muse* and *Knox*, was a proposition to guaranty, not an actual guarantee, and until notice of its acceptance was given, there was no contract subsisting between the parties. This notice ought to have been given at a much earlier time, especially in a case of this kind, where the letter was not addressed to any particular individual, but was open and addressed to the whole world. (*McIver* v. *Richardson*, 1 *M. & S.* 557—2 *Starkie*, 648—*Cremer* v. *Higginson*, 1 *Mason* 323—*Russell* v. *Perkins*, *Do.* 365—*Stafford* v. *Low*, 16 *Johns. Rep.* 67.)

In the present case there is a delay of twelve months. By the general usage of the mercantile world, to make one collaterally bound for the debt of another, notice must be given by the next mail, as in cases where an indorser is to be charged. It is admitted that the same degree of strictness is not required in this case, but it is submitted that the time above mentioned is too long.

The notice (allowing the letter to be one,) is not reasonable, because it does not specify the amount for which *Muse* and *Knox* were held responsible. The object of notice is to put the party on his guard, by informing him of his danger. A general notice of liability is not as likely to put a person on the alert, as the statement of a certain amount for which he is held responsible.

If the letter is a notice, it is only notice of non-payment, but the Plaintiff is bound to show a demand against the principal creditor, as well as a notice of non-payment. This follows from the same elementary principles which require it in bills of exchange. The same rigor of demand is not necessary, it is dispensed with in notorious insolvency, but some degree of it is required. (*Phillips* v. *Astling*, 2 *Taun.* 206, 210—*Warrington* v. *Furbor*, 8 *East.* 242, 245—*Lanuse* v. *Barker*, 3 *Wheat.* 101, 154 *note, approved by Spencer, C. J. in Stafford* v. *Low*, 16 *Johns. Rep.* 67.)

II. Both *Knox* and *Muse*, were discharged from the guarantee by the arrangement made between the Plain-

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tiff and the principal debtors. Upon this subject the rules of a Court of Law and a Court of Equity, are the same, whenever the forms of law permit the same matter to be shown in defence, (4 *Starkie* 1389—*Davey* v. *Pendergrass*, 5 *B. & A.* 187—*Rees* v. *Berrington*, 2 *Ves. jun.* 540.) In this action if a Court of Equity would consider the surety as discharged by such conduct of the creditor, he is discharged at law.

The creditor is bound to active diligence at the demand of a surety, though he may forbear to sue without such demand, and his delay will not discharge the surety, yet if he is requested by the surety to sue, and he neglects to do so, he does it on his own responsibility. (*King* v. *Baldwin*, 17 *Johns. Rep.* 884.) In the present case a suit was brought at the request of the surety, and it became the creditor's duty, he having undertaken to do that which, according to all the authorities, a Court of Equity would compel him to do, to prosecute it with an honest view to the benefit of the surety. Instead of doing this, without the consent of the surety, and to promote his own interest, by giving him security for the unguarantied part of his debt, he discontinues his action and discharges the principal debtor from arrest. It is immaterial what was the nature of the security given to the surety by the suit, whatever it might be, it was *his*, and the creditor has no right to interfere with it for his own benefit. (*Nesbit* v. *Smith*, 2 *Bro. Ch. Rep.* 578—*Rees* v. *Berrington*, 2 *Ves. jun.* 540—*King* v. *Baldwin*, 2 *John. Ch. Rep.* 554—*Mayhew* v. *Crichet*, 2 *Swanston*, 185.

Hogg & Badger, for the Plaintiff,

1. The letter of *Muse* and *Knox*, is a *guarantee of itself*, and not a mere proposal for a guarantee. The parties so understood it, it was given to a man who is stated in the letter to go on *there* to purchase goods—alleges the confidence of the writers in the firm he belonged to, and says "we are willing to hold ourselves responsible" for a sum specified, and to be brought at that time.

It is entirely different from *McIver* v. *Richardson*, cited on the other side, in which the expression is "*indeed* I have no *objection* to *guaranty* you against any loss," which expressions look to some further act or thing to be done, to complete the engagement.—But "I am willing to hold myself responsible," is nearly equivalent to "I will hold myself responsible," and *may* mean a present engagement, especially when considered with the context, that he was going to Philadelphia to buy goods—if it may mean it, it *does* mean it, for "the words are to be taken as strongly against the party making the guarantee as the sense of them will admit." (*Mason* v. *Prichard*, 2 *East*. 227.)

In *Rogers* v. *Warner*, the words were, "our sons wish to take up goods of you on credit, we are willing to lend our names as security for any amount they wish," and these were held to make a guarantee, and the only question was the extent of their operation. (8 *Johns. R.* 119.)

Our case is stronger—"to *lend* our *names* as security" may look to a further act to be done, "to hold ourselves responsible," imports an immediate undertaking, and the governing word in both is "willing."

Again, if any doubt could arise upon the words of the paper itself, it is removed by the Defendant's letter of September 18, 1823, which does expressly recognize it as an absolute engagement.

Being then a guarantee in itself, no notice was necessary, for in *McIver* v. *Richardson*, the sole enquiry was if the letter was a guarantee, or only a proposal, and if the former, it was conceded that no notice is required.

2. But if it be a proposal or offer to guaranty only, we are entitled to recover. This is established by the case of *McIver* v. *Richardson*.

The rule there laid down is, that when there is a mere overture to guaranty, the Defendant ought to have notice that it was meant to be accepted, or *there should be a subsequent consent on the Defendant's part*, to convert it

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into an *absolute guarantee*, per *Lord Ellenborough, at page* 563, and in that case, there being no notice until more than a year, and then no consent of Defendants so to regard it, the Plaintiff was nonsuited. But wherever notice is given by the Plaintiff, or any act done by the Defendant, evincing that he so considered it, then it is made an absolute guarantee, and no notice is necessary. The purpose of the notice or the consent is to complete the contract, by converting the *offer* into an *engagement*, when that is done by either, the Plaintiff's right is perfect. The letter of Defendant (18th September, 1823,) is full to this purpose, being apprized of the sale to *Burgess*, upon the faith of his letter of credit—he distinctly admits his liability to the amount of two thousand dollars, (the sum mentioned in the letter,) for goods sold at the *time* mentioned, and insists that he will not be liable *beyond* that amount, or for goods bought at another time. His words are "holding myself responsible only for the sum, &c." than which none other can be imagined more expressive of his consent to its being considered an absolute engagement, or his understanding that it was so—not a word said of its being a *mere offer*. The letter when examined, will appear to be stronger than any required to render even an indorser liable who has been discharged by neglect of the holder to give notice. Had the Defendant in the case of *McIver* v. *Richardson*, when payment was demanded, written a letter acknowledging his liability, on the letter as a guarantee, the case would have been decided otherwise, without hesitation.

It is conceived therefore, that the Plaintiff is entitled either, 1st, because it was originally an absolute guarantee, or 2d, if only an offer because the Defendant has *consented*, (after notice given him of the goods sold, and of his liability) that it should so be considered.

As to the objection that we should have given notice of the *amount* also. I answer first, it is an inference

drawn without authority, and supported by no decision, and secondly, if even required, it can only be when the *amount is indefinite*, not when as here, the amount and extent of liability is fixed by the guarantee. Thirdly, if notice of acceptance be not necessary in this case, (as shown above) notice of the amount of course is not.

HALL, Judge.—In this case, it is objected to the Plaintiff's recovery, that he did not give to the guarantors early notice, that he looked to them for payment; and the case of *McIver* v. *Richardson*, (1 *Maule & Selwyn*, 557) is relied upon. In that case, *Lord Ellenborough* says there was only an offer to guaranty, not a complete guarantee, and on that ground the case was decided. But in this case the guarantee is complete, and the parties so contemplated it, for it was their understanding of it, that *Burgess* should procure the goods upon it before he returned, and in fact he did so.

But the Defendant and *Muse*, had notice that their guarantee was relied upon for payment; and this is evidenced from *Knox's* letter. At what time the notice was received, does not appear. But if the Defendant thought it important, he had it in his power to show it, by producing the letter. This he has not thought proper to do. Besides *Burgess* and *Jordan* resided in Elizabeth City, where, or near to which, it may be inferred that the Defendant and *Muse* also lived. For *Knox's* letter bears date at that place, and it appears from that letter, that *Knox* had a knowledge of their situation, when he informed the Plaintiff of the shipment of wheat, as a mean of payment. It may therefore be taken for granted, that they had notice, and had it in their power to secure themselves against loss, in case it was practicable.

It appears that the Plaintiff made an effort to procure payment from *Burgess* in the fall of 1823, but failed in effecting it; that in that fall, or the winter following, *Burgess* and *Jordan* became insolvent.

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No objection was made on the trial, or evidence offered to show, that an injury was sustained, either for the want of early notice to the guarantors, that they were looked to for payment, or that the Plaintiff had been guilty of neglect or laches in not endeavoring to procure payment from *Burgess* and *Jordan*.

This case is not to be tested by principles which govern negotiable instruments, but by principles of fair dealing and common sense. If no loss was sustained for want of early notice, such notice need not be proved. If no loss was sustained by not suing *Burgess* and *Jordan*, it was unnecessary to bring suit. This is established by the case of *Warrington* v. *Furbor*, (8 *East* 246—*Williams* v. *Collins*, 2 *Mur.* 47—1 *Law Repos.* 580—*Oxley* v. *Young*, 2 *Hen. Bl.* 613—*Peel* v. *Tatlock*, 1 *Bos. & Pul.* 419).

Taylor, Chief-Justice.—This cannot be taken as a guarantee, but as a proposition for one, inasmuch as the address was general to the mercantile world, and not specific to any one individual; it was therefore incumbent upon the person, who delivered goods upon the faith of the letter, to give within reasonable time, notice to the persons making the engagement. The guarantee became liable in point of law to make reasonable efforts to recover the money, and the guarantors became bound that those exertions should prove successful. That a notice was given at some time, appears manifestly from the answer written to the Plaintiff, in relation to the letter to *Muse*, by the production of which, the Defendant might have shown when it was given, and the non-production of which furnishes a presumption, that in point of fact, the notice was given in due time.

The question whether due exertion would have procured satisfaction from the debtor, was not discussed in the Court below, as may be inferred from the record; the propriety therefore of granting a new trial, or of refusing it, depends on whose duty it was to bring that subject before the Court, and we think it was the duty of

the Defendant, for clearly it was a ground of defence, that due exertion had not been made, and not the ground of a charge, that it had been made.

If the Defendant can show that the debt has been lost through the Plaintiff's neglect, it is an answer to this action, because the Defendant undertook for no more.

As to the Plaintiff's discharging one of the principal debtors, when arrested in New York, it must be taken for granted, that no loss was sustained by the Defendant, for he has shown none; the law does not in this case, as in negotiable instruments, require any specific acts of diligence, but puts the question on broad and liberal ground of reasonable exertions, and loss through the want of them. If we could collect from the case, that these grounds of defence were offered to the Court, and overlooked by it, we should be disposed for that reason, to award a new trial, but this does not appear, and we must refuse it.

HENDERSON, Judge, concurred with the Chief-Justice.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Alexander S. Martin
v.
Robert Martin.
} From Rockingham.

A decree in Equity, directing a Defendant to execute a deed and deliver possession of land, is a breach of a covenant for quiet enjoyment, and the fact that the decree is founded on notice to him when he purchased, of an equity in the land, does not bar his action.

This was an action brought upon the covenant of quiet enjoyment, contained in a deed of bargain and sale executed by the Defendant and another to the Plaintiff, which was as follows; "and we the said *Robert Martin*, &c. do warrant unto the said *Alexander S. Martin*, his heirs, &c. the aforesaid land, against the claim or claims of any person whatsoever."

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On the trial, the Plaintiff produced a bill in equity filed by one *Thomas Overton*, against the Plaintiff and Defendant, whereby he prayed a conveyance of the same land, on the ground of a prior contract for the sale of it by the present Defendant to him, upon which he had paid a part of the purchase money: and also a decree in that suit by which he (the Plaintiff) was directed to convey the bargained and sold premises, and give possession thereof to *Overton*. It appeared from the Plaintiff's answer to *Overton's* bill, and from testimony in this cause, that he had full notice of *Overton's* equity, when he received the deed, which contained the covenant on which this suit was brought.

The Counsel for the Defendant, requested the Judge to instruct the Jury, that if they believed the Plaintiff had notice of *Overton's* equity, when he purchased, he was only entitled to nominal damages. But his Honor Judge DANIEL, refused to give these instructions, on the contrary, he informed the Jury that the decree was equivalent to an eviction under a judgment in ejectment, and that the Plaintiff was entitled to a verdict for his purchase money, with interest from the time he surrendered the possession, in obedience to the decree.

A verdict being returned according to the charge, the Defendant appealed.

No Counsel appeared for either patry in this Court.

HALL, Judge.—It is true in this case, that the Plaintiff had notice of *Overton's* claim to the land; but the Defendant had a much better knowledge of its nature.—It is not very likely, that if the Plaintiff had a full knowledge of the extent of the claim, he would have laid out his money in the purchase. But if the Defendant, with the knowledge he had, thinks proper to sell the land, warrant the title of it, and receive the purchase money, it is then but just, that when the Plaintiff lost the land, in consequence of the Defendant's having contracted

to sell it to *Overton*, that he should refund the purchase money with interest, as the Judge, in my opinion, very properly instructed the Jury.

It is true the Defendant conveyed the legal title to the Plaintiff, but he conveyed it subject to *Overton's* equity, and the decree, by which he lost it, was tantamount to an eviction by process of law. I think the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Patrick Hamilton
v.
Shadrach Parrish.
} From Granville.

A Justice's judgment must be evidenced by a written memorial, made at the time of its rendition.

Therefore, when a judgment was confessed before a Magistrate out of his county, and an entry thereof made on the warrant, and afterwards, a new confession was had before the Justice at a subsequent time within his county, but no written entry thereof made, and no alteration of the date of the old entry, It was held, that there was in law, no judgment.

One who enters himself as surety for the stay of execution before a Justice, is not thereby estopped to show, that the supposed judgment is in law a nullity.

This action was originally commenced before a Justice of the Peace. On the trial, the Plaintiff produced a judgment in his favor confessed by one *Gideon Wright*, dated the 12th day of October, 1821, which was stayed by the Defendant, but there was no date of the time when the stay was entered. The Defendant then proved by the Justice before whom the judgment was confessed, that it was given in Franklin; he, the witness, being a Justice in Granville, (vide *Hamilton* v. *Wright & Parrish*, 4 *Hawks*, 282). The witness further proved that he retained the judgment in his custody, under an agreement between the Plaintiff and *Wright*, in order to enable the

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latter to give surety for the stay; and that in November, after the date of the judgment, *Wright* came to him within the county of Granville, accompanied by the Defendant, when the judgment was produced, the stay written in the presence, and with the assent of both parties, signed by the Defendant, and attested by the witness.—The Plaintiff then offered to prove that *Wright* had at this time, again confessed the judgment. But his honor Judge STRANGE, being of opinion, that in order to render a judgment valid as a judicial act of the Justice, it must be reduced to writing at the time of the act, refused to receive the evidence unless the confession had been judicially passed upon by the Justice at the time it was made. The Counsel for the Plaintiff, then requested the Judge to instruct the Jury, that if from the facts they could infer that a judgment had been confessed in Granville county by *Wright*, they were at liberty to do so.—But his Honor charged the Jury, that if they believed the witness, there was no judgment against *Wright*, the act of a Justice performed out of the limits of his county, being a perfect nullity, and as the Defendant was only bound for the stay of execution on that judgment, as the principal debtor was not liable, neither was the Defendant. In submission to this charge, the Plaintiff suffered a nonsuit and appealed to this Court.

Nash & Badger, for the Plaintiff.

W. H. Haywood, for the Defendant.

HALL, Judge.—When the Plaintiff offered to prove that *Wright* again confessed judgment, I understand that that confession was intended to be evidenced by the same judgment which the Justice proved to have been confessed before him on the 12th day of October, 1821, in the county of Franklin. That judgment is no evidence of a judgment confessed by *Wright*, subsequently, when he offered the Defendant as surety to stay it, if the

date of the judgment had been altered to the day when surety was offered for the stay, it would have been proper to receive it. But as the judgment stands, it purports to be a judgment confessed at one time, and cannot be evidence of a judgment confessed at another.

There are other reasons, why it should not be so considered. There is no date fixing the time, when the Defendant became a surety; but there is a date to the judgment confessed. It would follow, that the time, for which the judgment was stayed, would be made to commence in fact before the surety for the stay was given, and interest might be charged upon the judgment from the same time.

I think for these reasons, the rule for a new trial should be discharged.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—In looking at the several acts relative to the jurisdiction of Justices, it seems clear that the liability of the principal and the security for a stay of the execution, is the same, and that in no case where the principal is not bound by the judgment, can the surety be made liable. The party praying the stay shall, if required, give sufficient security; and the acknowledgment of such security, entered by the Justice, and signed by the party, shall be sufficient to bind him; and if the judgment shall not be discharged, at the time to which the execution was stayed, then it shall be lawful for the Justice who has possession of the judgment, to issue execution as aforesaid, against the principal and securities, (*act of* 1794, *c.* 414). The security undertakes equally with the principal, to pay the amount of the judgment, and its existence is not less essential to charge him, than to charge the principal; it is all along presupposed in the act. It is clear that the endorsement on the warrant, purporting to be a confession of judgment by *Wright* and signed by the Justice, was a nullity, as being transacted by the latter, out of his county, and I think, it fol-

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lows, that no obligation to pay it, was incurred by the security undertaking to stay it, and that it was a valid defence for him, on the trial of the cause. The parol evidence, offered to prove a subsequent confession of judgment in the county, was properly rejected, for the law requires some written evidence of a proceeding, on which the Justice might issue execution, at the expiration of the stay. The giving judgment by the Justice, *ex vi termini*, imports that he shall make a written memorial of it, that it may be appealed from or stayed, and protect the Defendant from the same demand. It would be extremely dangerous to admit the doctrine, that while the warrant was in existence, on which there was no judgment, the Justice should yet be allowed to prove it by parol.—My opinion further is, that whether there was a judgment or not, was a proper question for the decision of the Court, and that the evidence of a judgment against *Wright*, was an indispensable ground for the Plaintiff's claim against the surety. The judgment ought therefore to be affirmed.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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David Worth
v.
Thomas Fentress. } From Randolph.

A plea of set off, is in nature of a cross action, and the Plaintiff may reply several matters thereto.

In practice, where no replication is actually entered, a general replication is understood.

Therefore, when the Defendant pleaded a set off and other pleas, and no replication to either was entered, and after a verdict and new trial awarded, leave was given the Plaintiff to reply the statute of limitations, to the plea of set off, It was held, that this was no waiver of the general replication before presumed, but that the Plaintiff might on the second trial, insist on both.

DEBT upon bond, to which the pleas were *non est factum, payment, and a set off.* There had been two trials in the Court below; at the first, the Plaintiff obtained a verdict, which was set aside and leave given him to reply the statute of limitations to the plea of set off—there was no entry of any other replication to either of the pleas.

On the second trial, the Plaintiff proved that the debt attempted to be set off, had been taken into account by arbitrators upon some other dispute, and that the Defendant had been allowed the full benefit of it. The Counsel for the Defendant objected to this evidence, insisting that by replying specially, the Plaintiff had waived the general replication, which was presumed to have been taken, and was estopped to deny the existence of the set off. But his honor Judge DANIEL, being of a different opinion, the Plaintiff had a verdict and the Defendant appealed.

Nash, for the Defendant.

Wilson, contra.

HENDERSON, Judge.—There was no special replication put in to the Defendant's pleas of *payment and set off.* It was understood according to our practice, that they were not confessed and avoided, but denied; and

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under that impression, the party went to trial. When afterwards the Defendant by leave of the Court, added the special replication of the statute of limitations to the plea of set off, I do not consider it was by any means an abandonment of the general replication to that plea; in other words, that the existence of the set off was thereby admitted; but that it still remained denied under the general replication, which was presumed to have been entered. It is true, that if there could have been but one replication to the plea of set off, the special replication afterwards entered, must have been an abandonment of the then existing general one. But the plea of set off is viewed as an action on the part of the Defendant, authorised in that form, by the statute introducing it, and consequently the Plaintiff's replication to it, in the nature of a plea; and therefore the Plaintiff may make the same defences to it by way of replication, as he could were an action brought on it against him. It is therefore no more a waiver of the former replication, than in an action on the set off, the addition of the plea of the statute of limitations would be a waiver of the general issue.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

Robert A. Jones
v.
John T. F. Yeargain.
} From Johnston.

Where a purchaser of goods transfers without endorsement, a note in payment, he thereby guaranties that the sum expressed in the note is due, and constitutes the seller his agent to sue for the same in his name, and if suit be fairly brought and duly prosecuted, and a set off is established by the maker, the seller may resort to the purchaser for the price of the goods sold.

Assumpsit for money had and received, and goods sold and delivered. On the trial, it appeared that the Defendant, a resident of Johnston, bought a horse of the

Plaintiff, a resident of Surry, and in payment delivered him a note made by one *Hill*, then residing in Wilkes, but before that time, in Johnston. The note was payable to the Defendant, and was handed by him to the Plaintiff without endorsement, with a request by the Defendant, to take out process against *Hill*, and if he could not pay the note, his mother-in-law probably would.

The Plaintiff produced a warrant issued by a Justice of the Peace for the county of Surry, at the instance of the Defendant to the use of the Plaintiff, against *Hill*, who had acknowledged service thereof, and on the same day a trial was had, upon which a set off was established by *Hill's* oath, and a judgment given for a small balance. The Plaintiff sought to recover, in this action, the amount of the set off.

The Defendant offered to prove that in fact no set off existed in favor of *Hill*; but his honor Judge MARTIN, rejected the testimony, and held the Defendant to be bound by the judgment, unless he could impeach it for fraud in the Plaintiff in relation to it. The Counsel for the Defendant, admitted that he had no such evidence to offer, and a verdict was taken for the amount of the set off, and judgment rendered accordingly, from which the Defendant appealed.

Devereux, for the appellant, cited 1 *Starkie* 186 *to* 205—*Gilbert's L. E.* 30, 31—*Bull. N. P.* 232—*Paynes Coles*, 1 *Mum.* 373, *Roan's opinion*—*Ward* v. *Wilkinson*, 4 *B. & A.* 410—6 *Ser. & Low.* 465, *S. C.*

Manly, contra, contended that there was authority to *Jones*, both implied from the nature of the transaction, and express from the direction given him, to use *Yeargain's* name in the warrant against *Hill*—that if he acted fairly and a set off was established by which the amount of the claim was reduced, he had a right to resort to *Yeargain*. As an agent of *Yeargain*, he was re-

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quired to use good faith only, and it was admitted by the Defendant in the Court below, that there was no fraud, and therefore the Plaintiff was entitled to recover.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The question, which arose on the trial of this cause, I do not think was the abstract one, whether in this contest with *Jones*, *Yeargain* was bound by the estoppel, arising upon the judgment in his suit with *Hill*. We are therefore relieved from expressing an opinion upon the effect of the declaration on the face of the warrant, that *Yeargain* sued for the use of *Jones*. Possibly that might have so connected *Jones* with the transaction, as to have bound him by the estoppel, and upon that ground only can *Yeargain* be bound in this contest with him; for estoppels must operate mutually, or not at all. Upon the exchange of the horse for the note, *Yeargain* became bound, (unless there was an express agreement to the contrary, and there appears to have been none,) that the sum called for in the note was due, and *Jones* was authorised by the nature of the transaction if necessary, to sue for it in the name of *Yeargain*. It necessarily followed, that a reduction of the sum called for in the note by way of a set off or otherwise, would be a violation of the guarantee made by *Yeargain*; that the whole was due. These were the obligations which the nature of the transaction imposed upon *Yeargain*, and obligations of a correspondent nature were imposed on *Jones*, growing out of the relationship which he assumed to *Yeargain*; that as his agent in using his (*Yeargain's*) name, he would act fairly on those points, in which he was interested. It is therefore necessary that we should ascertain that in this warrant, so far as regards the set off, in which *Yeargain* was certainly interested, *Jones* acted as a faithful agent, at least to see if it does not appear that he acted otherwise. A short time after the exchange, a warrant is taken out in the name of *Yeargain*, to the use of *Jones* against *Hill*. The service is acknow-

ledged by *Hill*, they went to trial on the same day, and the Justice found a set off to the amount of sixty dollars. The note calls for about eleven dollars more, including interest, for which a judgment was rendered, and *Hill* paid up that sum, at least he obtained a receipt upon the judgment for it. It does not appear that *Yeargain* was at all apprized of the Defendant's claim to a set off, or that any attempt was made to continue the cause, until he might enable his agent *Jones*, to resist it. In fact it is quite apparent, that *Jones* went to trial with his own consent, nay, required a trial; for it is well known, that only in cases where there is a friendly understanding between parties, and where the Plaintiff takes an acknowledged service, instead of an arrest by an officer and a holding to bail, the Justice would, without the consent of both parties, proceed to trial on the same day, and especially when one was acting as agent for a principal residing at the distance of one hundred and twenty miles at least, and the Defendant offered evidence so vitally affecting the interest of that principal. The thing carries upon its face a faithless agency; an agent entirely regardless of his principal's rights. But when to this is added that by having the set off established, *Jones* exchanged an insolvent for a solvent debtor, *Hill* for *Yeargain*, it is full proof of the character of the transaction. I say an insolvent for a solvent debtor, for it appears that *Hill's* solvency was not much relied on; for *Yeargain* told *Jones*, when the exchange was made to push *Hill*, and probably his mother-in-law would pay, if *Hill* could not; a thing by the way, not much in favor of *Yeargain*, to extort from the mother-in-law, the debts of her insolvent son-in-law. I think therefore, the Judge had abundant evidence, that the finding of the Justice was not conclusive between these parties, that the judgment was impeached for fraud if that was necessary, and that *Yeargain* ought to be let into proof, that in point of fact, there was no set off—

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which he was entitled to show before the Justice, but of which his agent *Jones*, deprived him.

Hall, Judge.—Laying out of this case, the question raised relative to the set off, the only enquiry would be, whether the Defendant is at all liable to the Plaintiff.—He purchased a horse with *Hill's* note, instead of money. The horse, and the note, without endorsement, were both delivered, the one for the other; and if this was done with good faith, it would seem that their liabilities extended no farther. This would be unlike the case of a note received on account of a prior debt, as a mean to raise the money due, in discharge of it; if the money was not collected, the debt would still be due, unless it should be otherwise stipulated.

In this case it must have been the understanding of the parties, that the money was due by *Hill*, and that the Plaintiff was at liberty to use the Defendant's name to collect it. It appears that *Hill* was warranted, and on the trial before a Justice of the Peace, a set off was allowed him; it does not appear that there was any fraud in the transaction. The question is, whether the Plaintiff or Defendant must bear the loss.

If *Hill* was entitled to the set off, there can be no doubt that the Defendant should bear the loss; because he impliedly, if not expressly guarantied that *Hill* owed the money. On the trial, it appears that the Defendant offered to show that *Hill* in point of fact, was not entitled to a set off. Opposed to this was the judgment rendered by the Justice of the Peace, to which the Defendant was a nominal party. This brings us to a point of difficulty, to be cleared up only by the circumstances of the case.

It is a circumstance to be kept in view, that whatever the dealings between the Defendant and *Hill* were, which led to the giving of the note by *Hill*, they were known to themselves, but not to the Plaintiff; and the probability is, that admitting that *Hill* was not entitled to the

set off, there was some foundation or color for it. This is evident from the fact, that the Justice of the Peace allowed it. It cannot be presumed, that it was claimed and allowed without a shadow of right. If there was any foundation for it, this was known to the Defendant, and it was his duty to conceal nothing, but to make a full disclosure to the Plaintiff, when he passed the note to him.

It is said that the Plaintiff should have given the Defendant notice of the trial. This would have been very proper; but the parties live a considerable distance apart. Perhaps the Plaintiff had not time to do so before the trial, after he knew that a set off was claimed.

I am however inclined to think that it would tend to the better understanding of the case, if the Defendant was permitted to give testimony as to the set off. Although the Defendant is a party to the judgment, yet he was not privy to it, when it was obtained. It is possible that he may show such a state of things as will enable the Jury to decide as the relative merits of the parties require. My brethren seem to think without doubt, that a new trial should be granted, and I am willing that the rule should be made absolute.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

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The Judges at the relation of Willis Rogers
v.
William P. Williams & James Houze, } From Franklin.

Before the act of 1823, a payment of money by the Sheriff to the Clerk, and a receipt of it by him *as Clerk*, were within the condition of his official bond, although the payment was made before the return day of the writ upon which the money was made.

DEBT upon the official bond of one *Jordan Hill*, given before the act of 1823, (*Taylor's Revisal, ch.* 1212) as Clerk of the Superior Court of Franklin. The condition of the bond was, "that the said *J. H.* should well and "truly preserve, and safely keep the records and papers, "and discharge and perform the duties of his said office."

The breach assigned, was the non payment by *Hill*, of money paid into his office by the Sheriff, upon a writ of *fieri facias*, which issued in favor of the Relator. Upon the trial, it appeared that the payment was made to *Hill* the Saturday before the return day of the writ, and that he gave a receipt for it, which he signed *as Clerk*.

His honor Judge DANIEL instructed the Jury, that a payment made to a Clerk in the vacation, was not a payment to him in virtue of his office, and therefore not within the condition of the bond. A verdict being returned for the Defendants, the Relator appealed.

W. H. Haywood, for the Appellant.

Badger, for the Defendants.

PER CURIAM.—A payment to the Clerk under the circumstances stated in this case, was a payment to him in virtue of his office, and his receipt is direct proof in what character he received it, and how the Sheriff paid it. This is strengthened by the time of payment, and by the execution against the Defendant in the original suit.

Let the judgment be reversed.

JUNE 1828.

John Bradley
v.
Joshua Souther & others. } From Rutherford.

A grant cannot be vacated without making the grantee or his heirs a party, although his interest in it has been assigned.

This was a petition to vacate a grant, which issued to *Andrew* and *David Miller*. The petition charged, that the Defendants were in possession of the land covered by the grant, claiming it under mesne conveyances from the patentees, but neither the latter nor their heirs, were made parties Defendant.

On the Fall circuit of 1827, his honor Judge NORWOOD vacated the grant, for reasons which it is unnecessary to state, as they were not discussed in this Court, and no opinion was given upon them.

The case came here upon the appeal of the Defendants, and *Badger*, for them, objected that the patentees were not parties—he contended that this must be the case, because the judgment being *in rem*, otherwise they might be affected by a suit which they had no opportunity of defending.

Wilson, contra.

PER CURIAM.—We think it is irregular and erroneous to vacate a grant, without making the patentee a party, if he is living, or his heirs if he is dead, and that an allegation of the patentee having assigned all his rights under the grant, will not dispense with the necessity of making him a party.

Let the judgment be reversed.*

* Another case at the instance of the same Plaintiff, was decided upon precisely the same grounds.

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Ann Daniel & another
v.
James M. Proctor & another. } From Currituck.

The wife of a sole executor of a will, her husband having renounced, is a competent witness to prove its execution as a will of land.

A wife is an incompetent witness when her husband is interested, upon principles of policy arising from the relation of husband and wife, not because she is interested in the suit, nor on account of her legal identity with her husband. Whether an executor is entitled to commissions on the sales of land directed by the will to be sold. Qu?

This was an issue of *devisavit vel non*, as to the supposed will of one *John Daniel*.

By a clause of the supposed will the testator devised as follows, "I leave my land and tenements whereon I "now reside, to be sold at the discretion of my executor, "and my land at Black Hall, likewise &c." One *Adam Etheridge* was appointed executor, and he, together with his wife and one *Whithead*, signed the paper as attesting witnesses.

When probate was demanded in the County Court, *Etheridge* renounced his right to the office of executor. On the trial in the Court below, before his honor Judge RUFFIN, the execution of the paper as a will, was duly proved by *Whithead*, and the Defendants in the *caveat* admitted it to be a good will of personal estate. The Counsel for the Plaintiff, contending it to be valid as to land, offered to prove its execution by the wife of *Etheridge*, the executor, who had renounced. But the presiding Judge ruled her to be incompetent, notwithstanding the renunciation of her husband—holding him to be incompetent, upon the score of his interest *at the time* of the execution of the supposed will, and that his interest at that time rendered his wife incompetent.

The Jury having returned a verdict, that the paper was a valid will of personal estate only, the Plaintiffs appealed.

No Counsel appeared for either party in this Court.

HENDERSON, Judge.—A commission upon the sale of lands is *an interest in the devise of lands*, and disqualifies an attesting witness to the will from giving evidence in its support. The act of 1784, (*Rev. ch.* 204,) regards the competency of the witness at the time of his attestation, and therefore his competency cannot be restored by his afterwards becoming disinterested, by a release or any other means. Both of these points were settled in the case of *Allison* v. *Allison*, (4 *Hawks* 141,) decided in this Court. There commissions were expressly given by the will to the witness; by this will commissions are not given. It is worthy of consideration, whether the executor is entitled to any commissions for executing this will, so far as regards the sale of the lands; in doing this he acts *as trustee*, not as executor. The Court may possibly allow commissions, but the act of 1799, (*Rev. ch.* 536,) is not imperative on the subject, for that act may be confined to such cases as fall within his office of executor. I may put too rigid a construction upon the act, for I confess that much observation on the effects of allowing commissions to those entrusted with the management of dead men's estates, and often seeing them eaten up by the managers, has induced me the more to approve of, and admire the maxim of the common law, that compensation for services shall not be made, unless there is a contract for it, express or implied; hence the rule in equity, that a trustee is entitled to no compensation, but only to a remuneration for actual disbursements. Taking it however for granted, that this executor is entitled to commissions upon the sale of the lands, yet as his renunciation of the executorship operates as a release of them, he being the only person named executor in the will, the competency of his wife as a witness to the will is thereby restored. The attesting witness is excluded from giving testimony, by the act of 1794, solely on the ground of interest. If therefore, a person was infamous at the time of attestation, and before giving evidence

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should be restored to credit, I presume that he is made competent; for the common law regards the situation of the witness, as respects his competency, when he gives evidence, and not at the time when he acquired his information. The wife of the executor in this case, had no interest; she could claim nothing from the result of this suit. It is true her husband independently of his release could, but what is his is not hers, it is at his, and not at her disposal. It is true that she cannot be a witness in any case where her husband has an interest, and some have gone so far as to hold, that she is incompetent to contradict what he had previously sworn. Her incompetency is not founded on the ground of her interest, but upon principles of policy; for she is as incompetent to swear against her husband, (however willing she may be to do so,) as to swear for him, unless in personal injuries to herself—her declarations are inadmissible against him; which they would not be, if she was excluded on the ground of interest, and because they are one flesh, and if what was his was hers. It requires neither argument nor authority to prove, that it is a reason of policy and not her interest, which excludes her. Neither will I enter into an argument to prove, that the relation of wife does not so pervert the heart, or mislead the understanding, as to render her attestation of a will of lands as unsafe, as that of her husband. It is sufficient that I find the law plainly so written in the act of 1784; she is not interested in the devise of the lands.

I think therefore, there should be a new trial.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed.

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Silvanus Howett
v.
Henry Alexander. } From Perquimons.

An infant is liable for the costs of a suit conducted by his *prochein amy*, and upon a judgment of non suit, a *fi. fa.* may issue against his property.

TROVER for a negro, and on the trial the Defendant claimed under a sale made by the Sheriff upon a *fi. fa.* which issued against the Plaintiff for the cost of a suit wherein he had been nonsuited. The Plaintiff was an infant at the commencement of that suit, and prosecuted it by his *prochein amy*.

The Jury, under the instruction of his honor Judge MARTIN, returned a verdict for the Defendant, and the Plaintiff appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

Hogg, for the Defendant. An infant is liable to pay costs, in every case in which a judgment is rendered against him.

The English Courts, sometimes oblige a *prochein amy* or guardian, to pay costs by an attachment. But it is not settled, whether an execution may issue against the infant himself. Under our statute of 1777, (*Rev. ch.* 115,) there can be no doubt on the subject.

In the State of Massachusetts, where there is a similar act, this case has been expressly decided. (*Smith* v. *Floyd*, 1 *Pickering*, 275.)

HENDERSON, Judge.—I know of no distinction between an infant and an adult, as to their liability for costs, nor can I see any reason why one should exist. The officers of the Court are equally entitled in the one case, as in the other. In both they labour at the instance of the party. It is true, that process is not applied for by the

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infant personally, but it is by one who is appointed by law to represent him, and to superintend his interest—his guardian or next friend. The suit is in his name, and for his benefit; the cost must be paid by some one, and if they are thrown on the guardian or next friend, few would undertake to sue in behalf of infants; a due regard to the interest of infants therefore, requires that they should be answerable. A guardian is selected by the Court and gives bond, and the Court should see that no one assumes the character of next friend, but a person of responsibility, and who it is probable has the interest of the infant at heart. If they abuse their office, they are liable to the infant.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Samuel S. Downey
v.
David J. Young.
} From Granville.

After the Defendant has pleaded to a warrant, so as to meet the case made by it, the Plaintiff cannot, upon an appeal, declare in such a manner as to render the plea ineffectual.

Upon a *quantum meruit*, where the Defendant pleaded a tender and paid money into Court, it seems that he is not estopped to show a special contract.

The Plaintiff warranted the Defendant "for the non-payment of the sum of sixty dollars due by account," and recovered judgment for fourteen dollars, from which the Defendant appealed. The memorandum of the pleas in the County Court was, "general issue, tender of ten dollars and fifty cents, money paid into Court." In the County Court the Defendant obtained a verdict, and the Plaintiff appealed. In the Superior Court a declaration was filed on a *quantum meruit*, whereby the Plaintiff sought to recover for hauling 14 sacks of salt. On the trial, the Defendant offered to prove that the salt was hauled upon a special contract, for a less sum than the

Plaintiff claimed under his *quantum meruit*. But his honor Judge STRANGE, thinking that the Defendant, by paying money into Court, had admitted the cause of action as set forth in the declaration, and had reduced the contest simply to the amount, which the Plaintiff could claim under the contract declared on, rejected the testimony. A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Nash & Devereux, for the Appellant.

Badger for the Plaintiff.

HALL, Judge.—By the act of 1794, (*Rev. ch.* 414,) it is directed that all sums, *and how due*, shall be expressed in the warrants which shall issue for them. The warrant, which issued in the present case, would sustain a count for money due the Plaintiff, in the manner in which the Defendant admits he is his debtor. According to this understanding of the warrant, the Defendant, in the County Court, pleaded a tender with a *profert*. It follows that he has a right to give any thing in evidence, which is consistent with this state of the pleadings, and that he is not deprived of this right by any gratuitous act of the Plaintiff. If by filing a declaration in the Superior Court consisting of this solitary count, the Plaintiff can deprive the Defendant of a defence, which he had already properly made, it should be considered as a nullity. On this ground alone, I think that the rule for a new trial should be made absolute. But if the question was upon the *quantum meruit* alone, I think the evidence should have been received, because the effect of a special contract if proved, would be either to defeat the Plaintiff upon that count, or to fix the value of the work and labor, claimed under it. In both of which cases, the Plaintiff would be entitled to the money brought into Court, although he might be subjected to the payment of the costs. But on this part of the case I give no opinion.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

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Richard B. Jones et ux. v. Isaac Taylor. } From Pitt.

A person who enters into the possession of land under an equitable title, with the consent of the legal owner of the fee, acquires no estate of any kind or degree in it, and the legal owner may maintain *trespass quare clausum fregit*, for an injury to the inheritance.

TRESPASS QUARE CLAUSUM FREGIT, and on the trial the case was, that the Plaintiffs by their Attorneys, had sealed and delivered the following instrument to one *John C. Stanly*.

"Know all men by these presents, that we, *Richard B. Jones* and *Frances Ann Jones* his wife, are held and firmly bound unto *John C. Stanly*, in the just and full sum of four thousand three hundred and four dollars, ($4304) current money of the State aforesaid, to the payment whereof well and truly to be made, to the said *John C. Stanly*, his executors, administrators and assigns, we bind ourselves and our respective heirs, executors and administrators, jointly and severally, firmly by these presents, sealed with our seals, and dated this 14th day of January, A. D. 1815.

"The condition of the above obligation is such, that whereas the said *Richard B. Jones* and *Frances Ann Jones*, his wife, by certain letters of attorney, under their hands and seals, have made and appointed *William Blackledge, Esq.* and *Hugh Jones*, their agents and attorneys, to sell and dispose of two certain tracts or parcels of land lying in Craven County, and on Neuse road, near the town of Newbern, the one patented by *Nicholas Rutledge* in 1744, for 400 acres, the other by *Jeremiah Vail*, in 1755, for 150 acres more or less, in obedience to which letters of attorney, the said *William* and *Hugh* have bargained and sold said tracts or parcels of land to the said *John C. Stanly* in fee simple, at and for the price of two thousand and one hundred and fifty dollars, which said consideration the said purchaser has paid or secured to be paid. Now therefore if the said *Richard B. Jones* and *Frances Ann* his wife, shall execute, seal and deliver unto the said *John C. Stanly*, his heirs, or assigns, a good and sufficient deed, and assurance to convey and assure said two tracts of land to the said *John C. Stanly*, his heirs and assigns, in fee simple absolute, in such manner and form as the acts of the General Assembly of the State of North-Carolina require, for the conveying and assuring of lands of *feme coverts* or married women, and shall also cause the private examination of said *Frances Ann Jones*, as to the execution of said deed or assurance to be had, obtained and recorded, in the manner required by the laws of North-

Carolina, for the sale and conveyance of the real estate of married women, then the above obligation to be null and void, otherwise to remain in full force, virtue and effect."

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The *locus in quo* was included within the boundaries of one of the patents, mentioned in the condition of the bond. Directly after its execution, *Stanly*, with the consent of *Jones* and *Blackledge*, entered into the premises, and took actual possession of the cleared land, which included a part of both patents, and continued the entire and exclusive possession of it, cultivating it, and claiming and using the timber on every part of the land within the boundaries of the patents, although not within his enclosure.

The trespass complained of was committed after the sale to *Stanly*, and before he had received a conveyance, viz. in January, 1818, when the Defendant, claiming title adverse to that of the Plaintiffs, entered upon the land, and cut and used several timber trees growing thereon, but on the outer side of the fences and enclosures of *Stanly*. Since the first entry of *Stanly*, the Plaintiffs have had no possession of the land, unless the possession of *Stanly* is in law their possession; or unless they have a possession constructively, by reason of their legal title.

Upon these facts, his honor Judge RUFFIN held the possession of the *locus in quo* to be in *Stanly*, and that the Plaintiffs had not a possession, sufficient to enable them to sustain this action. In submission to this opinion the Plaintiffs suffered a nonsuit, and appealed.

Gaston & Badger, for the Plaintiff, referred to *Starr* v. *Jackson*, 11 *Mass. R.* 519—*Stuyvesant* v. *Durham*, 9 *John. Rep.* 61—*Taylor* v. *Townsend*, 8 *Mass. R.* 411—*Kennedy* v. *Wheatley*, 2 *Haywood* 402—*McMillan* v. *Hafley*, 2 *Law Repos.* 89—*Gordon* v. *Harper*, 7 *Term Rep.* 12—*Carson* v. *Noble*, 1 *Law Repos.* 522—*White* v. *Morris*, 1 *Hawks* 501—*Chitty on Pleading*, 49—2 *Sanders* 17 *a*, *n.* 1—*Cruise Dig. Tenant at will*, *s.* 10, 19—*Bromfield* v. *Smith*, 6 *East.* 530—*Knight* v. *Quigley*, 2 *Camp.* 505—

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Hogan v. *Johnson*, 2 *Taun.* 148—*Doug.* 21—*Cruise Dig. Mortgage, s.* 3—*Adams on Ejectment*, 103, 108, 117, 133—*Thunder ex dem. of Weaver* v. *Belcher*, 3 *East.* 449—*Viner Trespass N.*—*Wild* v. *Cantello*, 1 *John. Cas.* 123—*Jackson* v. *Rogers*, *Do.* 33—*Hyatt* v. *Wood*, 4 *John. Rep.* 150—2 *Cain's cases in error*, 314 *S. C.*—*Brooke's Ab. Trespass, Pl.* 73, 131—*Do. Tenant per Copie Pl.* 2, 3—*Sugden on vendors*, 183—*Doe ex dem. of Hollingsworth* v. *Stennett*, 2 *Esp. R.* 718—2 *Bl. Com.* 166-7—*Co. Litt.* 298—8 *Rep.* 75—*Com. Dig. Trespass A.* 2—*Mayor of Northampton* v. *Ward*, 1 *Wils.* 107.

Hogg, for the Defendant, cited *Myrick* v. *Bishop*, 1 *Hawks* 485—*Lit. s.* 671—*Parker* v. *Walker*, 3. *Wil.* 25—*Goodtitle ex dem. of Galloway* v. *Herbert*, 4 *Term. Rep.* 680—*Right ex dem. of Lewis* v. *Beard*, 13 *East.* 210—*Brane* v. *Rawlins*, 10 *Do.* 261—*Co. Litt.* 270 *b. note*—*Ostrander* v. *Rowan*, 9 *John. R.* 330—*Livingston* v. *Nevin*, 10 *Johns. R.* 335—4 *Com. Dig. by Hammond, estate by grant, G.* 15—*Gilbert on Tenures*, 30 *Litt. s.* 411—*Co. Litt.* 51 *a.*—5 *Rep.* 13 *a.*—*Phillips* v. *Covert*, 7 *John. Rep.* 1—*Suffern* v. *Townsend*, 9 *Do.* 35—*Cooper* v. *Stower*, *Do.* 331—*Ward* v. *McCauley*, 4 *Term Rep.* 489—*Gordon* v. *Walker*, 7 *Do.* 9—*White* v. *Morris*, 1 *Hawks* 301—*Bacon Ab. Trespass*, 3—*Bacon's Institutes, C. cites* 2 *Lev.* 147—*Bro. Ab. Trespass, pl.* 365—*Redingfield v. Onslow*, 6 *Lev.* 209—3 *Wil.* 120—3 *Bl. Com.* 201—*Harper* v. *Burbeck*, 3 *Burr.* 1556—*Graham* v. *Peat*, 1 *East.* 244—*King* v. *Watson*, 5 *East.* 480—*Campbell* v. *Arnold*, 1 *John. R.* 512—*Tobey* v. *Webster*, 3 *Do.* 460—*Hyatt* v. *Wood*, 4 *Do.* 314—*Stuyvesant* v. *Tompkins*, 9 *Do.* 61—*Wickham* v. *Freeman*, 12 *Do.* 183—*Jefferson* v. *Jefferson*, 3 *Lev.* 181—1 *Chitty* 242—1 *Do.* 244—*Elwes* v. *Maw*, 3 *East.* 18—*Kenlyside* v. *Thornton*, 2 *Bl. Rep.* 1111—*Hilliard* v. *Dorch*, 3 *Hawks.* 246—*Co. Litt.* 57 *b.*—*St.* 6 *Ann, Chap.* 18, *s.* 5—4 *Geo. II. ch.* 28.

HENDERSON, Judge.—I shall confine myself to a short discussion of the principles, to be extracted from the authorities which have been cited. There cannot be a possession of lands, without some estate in them. If one enter on my lands, and oust me, he thereby gains an estate in them, and puts an end to mine; for if he acquire it, I must lose it. It cannot exist in us both adversely at the same time. I may put an end to the adverse estate by action or entry, but it continues until an end is put to it. For trespasses, whilst in this state, the disseisor may bring his action, but I cannot, for I have no estate in the land; I have nothing but a right, not to the land to speak properly, but to an estate in the land. If one enter by my permission, and I grant him no estate in the land, by which is meant an interest recognized in the law, he may be my bailiff, my agent, my receiver, or my guest, but he is not my tenant. He does not divest me of my possession; he may hold the possession *for* me, but he does not hold it *against* me. That no estate, that is, interest in the land, is created by this permission to enter, is evident from the fact that there is no writ in the register prescribed for it, in case it should be divested, whereby it may be restored. We find in the register a variety of writs for the owners of estates, by which they may be restored to them, but none for such a claimant as *John C. Stanly*. There are the various writs for the tenant in fee, in tail and for life; and since the time of *Edward 4th*, and *Henry 7th*, we have used the ejectment as a remedy for the termor, not only to recover damages, but the term itself. On this subject more shall be said hereafter. It is absurd for the law to recognize an estate, or an interest in land, and yet not provide a mode for the recovery of that estate or interest, should it be lost. If *Stanly's* interest is an estate, give it a name.—Is it a fee simple? An answer in the negative is at once given, and perhaps with some petulance. But it has more of the character of a fee simple, than of any other

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estate. The former owners, *Jones* and wife, consented that *Stanly* should be owner in fee, and unless upon the principle that the major includes the minor, it has not a single property of any other estate known in the law.— To an estate at will, to which it is attempted to be reduced, it bears not the least resemblance; for if we take either the agreement itself, or the understanding of it by the parties as our guide, we shall find that it was to continue forever, instead of being determinable at the will of the parties; it was never designed, that either of them should put an end to it at his pleasure. The same objections may be made to it, as an estate from year to year. If it is a tenancy, what services are due; the reply made is, that none were reserved, but if it is a tenancy, fealty is due of common right. I use the words tenant and tenancy in their modern acceptation, not in their feudal meaning. We may perplex ourselves in vain to find out a legal term to designate this interest, for it has in law no existence. It is unknown to the law, it is an equitable fee simple, and were it not for the notice taken of it in the Courts of Equity, we should not, in the Courts of Law, be so perplexed with it. We would call it at law what it really is, a license to enter, which protects the person to whom it is given, from an action for entering and occupying, until the license is withdrawn. And although there is much said in the books on the subject, it amounts to only this, it protects the person both from an action of trespass *quare clausum fregit*, and the action of ejectment; and this upon common law principles. I suppose it is upon principles of policy, for the encouragement of agriculture, that such license cannot be withdrawn, but upon reasonable notice, say six months, and that the occupier should have the emblements. This rule, however, does not affect the rights of the owners as to strangers. Astute as we may be, to make the interest of *Stanly* something like an estate, something like a possession, to protect the person

who thus enters under a licence from the actions of the owner, we have no such motive as regards strangers—mere wrongdoers. If we are governed by principles of property, it is much more proper that the owner should bring the action, than one who enters under a treaty for a purchase. From the contract, if it should be fulfilled, the owner is trustee for the purchaser. He therefore recovers for the whole injury; there can be no doubt upon the question, whether the damages are not awarded to the wrong person. But the purchaser's claim to the damages is provisional; the purchase may not be completed, and in such cases the wrong person may pocket the recovery. This uncertainty would perplex the Jury, and they would necessarily be influenced by the probability of the purchase being completed or not.

I have read, with great satisfaction, the very able opinion of Chief-Justice *Parker*, in the case of *Starr* v. *Jackson*, (11 *Mass. Rep.* 519,) and it is no objection that his argument would lead to the same result, if there was a lease for years, as it stood before the time of *Edward 4th*. For until that time, a termor had no estate, and consequently no possession in the lands, I mean such a possession as ousted that of the owner. As to the world, the landlord had the ownership and possession. As between termor and landlord, their relationship existed in contract—in agreement; nothing passed in the land. It is true, the termor had his action of ejectment for his ouster, but before that time, I believe he could not sustain trespass *quare clausum fregit*. But should I be mistaken in this, it weakens the argument but slightly; if not, it is conclusive.

Upon no principle, can a mere tenant at will interfere with the lord's right of sustaining the action, for a permanent injury to the freehold. This reasoning, by no means, goes to deprive such an occupier from maintaining trespass against a wrongdoer, for ousting him from the possession, or from recovering for a trespass on

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things more immediately in his possession; as for entering the house, or enclosure, or treading down his corn or grass, or pulling down trees necessary for shelter, shade, fuel or repairs; and the right would also extend to a tenant at sufferance. But this is beside the owner's right to the action; it does not affect that. I repeat it again, that it is the countenance which a Court of Equity gives to such purchasers, which perplexes us. Strip it of that, and it presents the simple case of one, who enters on lands by the license of the owner, which certainly protects him for all acts done under that authority; but like all licenses, it is revocable, and does not interfere with the possession of the owner.

We read of the plea of *liberum tenementum* for the landlord, but of none analagous to it, for the termor.—He defends his entry and possession under the estate of his landlord, by showing a licence or permission from him. Had he an estate recognized in the ancient law, it would have prescribed to him a plea founded upon it. But we find that it gave him neither an action to recover his estate or interest, or a plea under which he might assert it. And it would be strange, if the freeholder should lose his rights in the estate, without another person's acquiring them. I speak of the law as it stood before the time of *Edward 4th*, when the owner of an estate and the freeholder were synonymous terms. That an estate in the land is necessary to support trespass, *quare clausum fregit*, see the following cases; *Hoe* v. *Taylor*, (*Croke Eliz.* 413,) also *Wilder* v. *Bridgewater*, (*Do.* 421.)

Hall, Judge.—It is contended on behalf of the Defendant, that the force of the trespass was spent upon *John C. Stanly*, and only reached the Plaintiff's as an injury in its consequences, and that therefore they are entitled to redress by an action on the case, and not by an action of trespass *quare clausum fregit*. This is true, if *Stanly* stood between the parties as tenant of the land.

If *Stanly* was on the land, vested with no rights, or clothed with no authority whatever over it, his solitary existence upon it will not vary the rights of the parties, nor the remedies by which those rights are to be asserted. It is therefore of importance to ascertain, what the *legal* relative rights of *Stanly* are. I say *legal* rights, because we are examining the question in a Court of Law.

Stanly went into possession of the land by the consent of *Blackledge* and *Jones*, agents of the Plaintiffs, and no doubt with the concurrence of the Plaintiffs themselves. It was understood by all, that the Plaintiffs were under an obligation to make him a title to the land; but before that title was made, he had no legal right, either to the land, or to the possession of it, which a Court of Law would notice, except that if an action of trespass was brought against him, he might justify under the license given him to enter, which would also protect his interest in the growing crop. In other respects, after the license to take possession had been countermanded, and he had notice to depart, he was in the view of a Court of Law, on the land as a stranger, and might be immediately ejected. If he was on the land as a tenant, either from year to year, or at his will, he had a title to the possession, and that title would be protected by a Court of Law; he must have six months notice to quit, and unless that notice was given, he could not be ejected. Such a possession, under such a tenancy, would support an action of trespass, and while it existed, the freeholder or owner of the land could not bring trespass, because although the freehold was in him, he had not the possession of the land, which, either actual or constructive, is necessary to support the action. When therefore, there is a possession supported by a legal right in one man, and the freehold or fee simple is in another, the latter cannot maintain trespass *quare clausum fregit*. So if A, tenant for years, make a lease at will to B, and B is ejected, A cannot have this action upon that ouster, because al-

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though the possesion of B is the possession of A, yet the trespass which is complained of must be against the actual possession, and that was in B. (2 *Bac. Ab.* 423, cited and *Roll. Rep.* 3.) But a person who is in possession, without any legal right, cannot maintain the action.

I admit that any right, which *Stanly* acquired by taking possession, may be asserted by this form of action in a Court of Law, as if a mere *positum pedis* trespass was committed upon his *crop*, or upon his enclosure.

In fact, *Stanly* is in possession only under an Equity, which this Court cannot notice, although in a Court of Equity he is considered as tenant in fee simple. But this Equity does not divest the Plaintiffs of that constructive possession which is necessary to maintain this action, especially as *Stanly* had no special occupancy of the trees, on which the trespass was committed. I think the nonsuit should be set aside, and a new trial granted.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed.

Mary Gregory
v.
John Haughton adm'r of Stephen R. Hooker.
} From Halifax.

Where the Plaintiff fixes the Defendant with assets for a part of his claim, he recovers that amount of assets and all costs, and is entitled to judgment *quando* for the residue.

If judgment *quando* is not entered up at the trial term, it may be afterwards, *nunc pro tunc*, if third persons be not injured by it.

In this case, (vide 1 *Law Repos.* 100—2 *Murph.* 250—2 *Law Repos.* 116—1 *Hawks* 394,) the Plaintiff on the Spring Circuit of 1825, obtained a verdict for £81 8*s.* 5*d.* She fixed the Defendant with assets to the amount of ten shillings, for which, and all costs, execution was awarded; but there was no entry of judgment *quando* for the residue of the sum found by the Jury.

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The Plaintiff according to a previous notice, moved at the Spring Term of 1827, for judgment *quando*, to be entered *nunc pro tunc*. This was opposed by the Defendant, but was allowed by his honor Judge RUFFIN, whereupon the Defendant appealed.

The cause was submitted without argument, by *Gaston* for the Plaintiff, and by *Hogg* and *Badger*, for the Defendant.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The principles of pleading at common law do not authorize a judgment of *quando* against an administrator, where issue is taken on the plea, of *plene administravit*, and it is found in his favor.—The Defendant is then out of Court, and the Plaintiff is forever concluded. The rule established in *Mary Shipley's* case, (8 *Rep.* 134 *b.*) that upon such a plea, the Plaintiff may immediately take judgment of asset *quando*, continues to be the law at this day; and the form of replication to such a plea shows, that the Plaintiff must admit the truth of it, to entitle him to such a judgment. (2 *Chitty* 613.) If he take issue upon the plea, he is bound to prove that the executor has some assets in his hands, and having done so, he is then entitled to a like judgment, for the residue of the debt, which there are not present assets to pay. It is on this ground, that the Plaintiff was entitled in this case to a judgment *quando* and as it was omitted at the term of trial, and it does not appear that there are any third persons likely to be injured by the amendment, it is reasonable and just that it now be made. The case of *Mara* v. *Quin* furnishes an example of a judgment being amended, so as to attach upon the assets, received between the time of suing out the writ and the judgment. (6 *Term. Rep.* 1.)

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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Archibald McEachin et al.
v.
William C. McFarland et al. } From Richmond,

A levy upon land under a Justice's judgment, made more than three months after the date of the execution, being void, a *sci. fa.* against heirs founded on it was dismissed.

The Plaintiffs obtained a judgment against the executors of *Duncan McFarland*, before a Magistrate, who found the plea of fully administered, in favor of the Defendants. An execution on this judgment issued on the 6th of February, 1826, which was renewed on the 8th of July following. On the 15th of January, 1827, the renewed execution was levied upon the land which had descended to the heirs of *Duncan McFarland*, (the present Defendants,) who were brought into Court by writ of *scire facias*, under the act of 1791, *(Rev. ch. 352.)*

On the last circuit, his honor Judge NORWOOD dismissed the *sci. fa.* on account of the irregularity in the levy, and the Plaintiffs appealed.

No Counsel appeared for either party in this Court.

HALL, Judge.—The act of 1803, *(Rev. ch. 627,)* directs that all executions issued by a Justice of the Peace, shall be made returnable within three months, and that in case it is not discharged, another execution shall be issued for what appears to be due. The execution in this case was renewed on the 8th of July, 1826; but it was not only not returned in three months, but it was executed after their expiration, viz. on the 15th day of January, 1827, more than six months after it had issued. I therefore think the judgment of the Superior Court should be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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William Anderson
v.
John H. Hawkins. } From Franklin.

Acts and declarations are not evidence against one who was not a party or privy to them.

Therefore, where the question was, whether A had refused to guaranty a bank note to B, it was held, HENDERSON Judge dissenting, that the refusal of A to guaranty the same note, on offering it to C immediately before it was passed to B, but not in his presence, was *res inter alios acta* and inadmissible.

After the trial had in this case, (3 *Hawks* 568,) it came on to be tried before his honor Judge MARTIN, on the last circuit, when the question was, whether the Defendant had not refused to guaranty, as genuine, a bank bill he had passed to the agent of the Plaintiff, and which had turned out to be forged.

The Defendant called a witness, who swore that he was present when the note was passed to the agent, and that the Defendant then told him that if he took it, he must do so at his own risk. This statement was denied by the agent, who swore that no such conversation took place, and that the witness, who deposed to it, was not present when the note was passed to him.

The Defendant then offered to prove, that immediately before the transaction deposed to by the Plaintiff's agent, he, the Defendant, had offered the note to one *Mitchell*, and had refused to guaranty it, unless *Mitchell* paid him a premium for the bill and his guarantee. Neither the Plaintiff nor his agent was present at the time of the conversation. The presiding Judge rejected the testimony.

A verdict being returned for the Plaintiff, the Defendant appealed.

Badger, for the Plaintiff.

Seawell & W. H. Haywood, for the Defendant.

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Taylor, Chief-Justice.—A person who receives a bank bill takes upon himself the solvency of the Bank, but he who pays or exchanges it, guaranties the bill to be genuine. This is the general law of the land, subject to which the parties must be presumed to have acted, if nothing passed between them at the time of contract.—But a witness was introduced in this case, who testified on behalf of the Defendant, that the latter told Plaintiffs agent at the time of the contract, the agent who made it, that if he took the bill, he must do it at his own risk. On the other hand, the Plaintiff's agent, who made the contract, testifies that no such conversation passed, and that he did not even see the witness who deposed to it, present at the time.

Evidence was then offered on the part of the Defendant, of a conversation of the Defendant's respecting this bill to wit, that of *Mitchell*, to whom he offered it; if he took it at par, it would be at his own risk; if Defendant guarantied it he was to have a premium. This conversation is stated to have taken place in a store house, immediately before the conversation given in evidence by the Plaintiff's agent, and in the absence of the Plaintiff and his agent. The record states this confusedly, and I have nearly transcribed it, but I understand it to have been, that the Defendant told *Mitchell*, he would not guaranty it without a premium; that if he would not give a premium, he (*Mitchell*) must take the bill at his own risk.

This evidence was rejected by the Court, and the question now presented is, was the evidence properly rejected or not. I am of opinion that it was properly rejected.

Without this evidence, and supposing the credibility of the two conflicting witnesses to be equal, which I must take for granted, the case stands upon the legal implication, that the Defendant guarantied the bill and is liable to compensate the Plaintiff, since it turned out to be a counterfeit.

It is a rule of moral, as well as of legal construction, that a contract is to be carried into execution in that sense, in which the promiser apprehended, at the time the promisee received it. It is not the sense, says a writer of much observation, in which the promiser actually intended it, that always governs the interpretation of an equivocal promise; because at that rate a man might excite expectations which he never meant, nor would be obliged to satisfy. Much less is it the sense, in which the promisee actually received the promise; for according to that rule, the promiser might be drawn into engagements, which he never meant to undertake. It must therefore be the sense, (for there is no other remaining) in which the promiser believed that the promisee accepted his promise. And this, says he, will not differ from the actual intention of the promiser, where the promise is given without collusion or reserve. (*Paley* 96.)

The application of this rule of natural justice appears to me to be decisive of this question. For which interpretation did *Hawkins* apprehend that *Anderson* put upon the contract? Clearly, as nothing passed between them in explanation, discharging *Hawkins* from his guarantee, and placing the risk on *Anderson*, *Hawkins* must have believed that *Anderson* expected to be indemnified, in the event of the note's proving to be a counterfeit. But if this evidence is admissible, the rule is inverted, and *Anderson* is bound, not as *Hawkins* thought he conceived himself to be, but as a secret intention of *Hawkins*, which *Anderson* had no means of exploring, designed he should be.

It is argued in support of the admissibility of the evidence, that it is a fact connected with the case—that the Jury may draw their own inference from it, and as the scales of evidence hang in equilibrio, the introduction of this fact will make one of them preponderate.

But this argument is met by a stubborn, and most wise and salutary rule of law, that the acts and declarations

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of others are not admissible in evidence against any one, as affording a pre-umption against him, in the way of admission or otherwise. A man's privity to the acts and declarations of another may authorize the inference of his assent, and operate as an admission against himself. But where he is utterly a stranger to them, no inference or presumption can justly be made against him, founded upon his own admission or conduct. Were this evidence admissible, *Anderson* would certainly be bound by the declaration and act of *Hawkins*, to which he was no wise privy, and to which if he had been privy, the presumption is, he would not have made the contract in the manner he did. The only inference the Jury could derive from the evidence is, that *Hawkins* did not intend to guaranty the bill; but it is not contrary to the most obvious principles of justice, that *Anderson* should be bound by the secret intentions of *Hawkins*, which intentions were contradicted by his conduct? The irrelevancy of the evidence is not the only objection to it, for that might do no other mischief, than needlessly consume time, but its tendency is to impair the rights of *Anderson*, by the *res acta* between *Mitchell* and *Hawkins*.

The argument, that according to the ordinary motives of human conduct it is incredible that *Hawkins* should have passed the bill to *Anderson* with a guarantee, when he had a few minutes before, demanded a premium for one, is answered in a manner satisfactory to my mind; that to establish such a principle of evidence, would enable men, knavishly disposed, to create evidence for themselves, by making an offer to one person, different from a contract they would immediately afterwards make with another, and then adduce such evidence to destroy the contract actually made. In every view I have been able to take of the case, I am compelled to believe that there ought not to be a new trial.

HALL, Judge, concurred with the Chief-Justice.

HENDERSON, Judge, *dissentiente.*—This evidence can be rejected only upon the ground of its irrelevancy. There is no dispute as to the competency of the evidence, by which the fact was to be proved. That fact is relevant which tends to elucidate the point in issue, or from which a rational inference can be drawn, in relation to it. In this view of the case, it is entirely immaterial whether *Anderson* or his agent was present when *Hawkins* made the offer to *Mitchell.* Their presence does not affect the existence of the fact. If the evidence tended to impose upon *Anderson* terms or conditions, which did not arise out of his contract, or what is the same, out of the transaction, then his presence would be all-important, for it would be unjust to vary or change his contract without his consent, and if he knew not of this previous conversation with *Mitchell,* to superadd it to his engagement would be to do so without his consent, & consequently would be an act of injustice. But the difficulty in the case is, what his contract was. *Hawkins* alleges, that upon the exchange of the Bank note, he *expressly refused to guaranty it without a premium.* The agent of *Anderson* in this transaction, swears that he did not expressly refuse to make the guarantee, inasmuch as nothing was said in relation to it. *Hawkins* proves by a witness, who says that he was present when the exchange was made, that he (*Hawkins*) did expressly refuse to make the guarantee. *Hawkins* asks to have this fact thrown into the scale on his side, (contending that it *weighs something.*) to-wit, that upon a treaty of exchange of the same note with *Mitchell,* which took place a few moments before the exchange with *Anderson,* he expressly refused to make the guarantee without a premium, on terms precisely the same in all other respects with those, on which *Anderson* allows he afterwards closed with him; and therefore he asks the Jury to believe the assertion of *his* witness; as he (*Hawkins*) judging by the ordinary motives of mankind, would not demand a pre-

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mium in the one case, and omit to do so in the other, in transactions so much alike, that they may well be termed identical. He contends that there was no motive or inducement so to act, and it is therefore probable that he did not so act. In this view of the case, the absence of *Anderson* or his agent, is unimportant. Irrelevant facts are those which do not relate to the issue; those from which a rational inference cannot be drawn in relation to it. They are rejected therefore upon two grounds, that an examination into them would be an unnecessary consumption of time, and secondly, that they tend to mislead the Jury by holding out to them false lights. The Court therefore rejects all testimony, which does not tend to throw light upon the subject—every one from which the Jury cannot draw a rational inference in relation to the issue, or which would tend to mislead. But if they are of an opposite character, if they do throw light on the issue, if they do not tend to mislead the Jury, but are such that a rational inference can be drawn from them, they are to be thrown into the scale and weighed by the Jury. It is the province of the Court to determine the question whether they may have *any* weight, and of the Jury to ascertain how much that weight is. Nor is it required, that the act be of such a nature that the Jury *must* draw an inference from it, it is sufficient that they *may* do so. In this case, were it the law that on the exchange of a bank note, no implied guarantee arose that the note was genuine, but it required an express promise to create one, the influence would be much stronger in favor of *Hawkins*; it is much weakened to be sure, but not destroyed by the law being otherwise. But although weakened, it yet may weigh something, and should therefore have been considered by the Jury.

I think that there ought to be a new trial.

Per Curiam.—Judgment affirmed.

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William Lenoir, Chairman,
v.
James Wellborn & others. } From Wilkes.

By the act of 1819, (*Rev. ch.* 499,) the Sheriff who is in office on the 1st day of April in each year, is bound for the taxes collectable during that year, although his term may expire before they can be collected.

Therefore, where a Sheriff was elected after the 1st day of April, and resigned in February ensuing, he is not liable for the collection of any taxes.

DEBT upon the official bond of *George G. Witherspoon*, as Sheriff of Wilkes. The condition of which was "that the said *G. G. W.* Sheriff, &c. shall settle with the County Trustee for the County, Jail, and Poor taxes for the year 1821, in the time prescribed by law."

The breach assigned was, that *G. G. Witherspoon*, had not collected the taxes imposed in the year 1820.

On the trial, a verdict was taken for the Plaintiff subject to the opinion of the Court upon the following case:

G. G. Witherspoon was elected in April 1821, when he gave the bond on which this suit was brought—he held the office of Sheriff until the ensuing February term of the County Court, when he tendered his resignation, which was duly accepted and a successor appointed.

At April term 1821, sundry taxes were imposed for the year 1820, and at the same term, in the year 1822, sundry others for the year 1821, when the Court directed that the tax books for the year 1821, should be delivered to the successor of *G. G. Witherspoon*. At April term, 1821, the tax lists for the year 1820, had been delivered to one *Thomas Witherspoon*, who was the predecessor of *G. G. Witherspoon*, *Thomas Witherspoon*, being at that time acting Sheriff.

No tax lists were ever delivered to *G. G. Witherspoon*, and his election took place after the first day of April 1821.

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Lenoir v. Wellborn,

Upon this case, his honor Judge NORWOOD, set aside the verdict and directed a judgment to be entered for the Defendants, from which the Plaintiff appealed.

Wilson, for the Plaintiff, submitted the case without argument. No Counsel appeared for the Defendants.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The question in this case is, whether the sureties for *G. G. Witherspoon*, late Sheriff of Wilkes, are liable for the taxes of 1820, by virtue of their bond. It appears from the record, that *Witherspoon* was elected Sheriff at April session 1821, and that the bond is conditioned for the taxes therein specified, for the year 1821. To make the sureties responsible for any other taxes than those, would be going beyond the bond. But the taxes laid in 1821, were collectable only in 1822, with the exception of the case where persons were about to remove, to avoid the tax; before that period the Sheriff for 1821, had no power to act in that respect, and when that time arrived, he had resigned the office, as he is permitted to do by law.—"The respective Sheriffs are to proceed, after the first day of April, in each and every year, to collect the taxes." (*Act of* 1819. *Rev. ch*, 999.) Under the true construction of this act, the right to collect the taxes does not attach in the Sheriff unless he remain in office after the first day of April, nor consequently can responsibility attach to his sureties. The consequence of a different construction would be, to make two different sets of securities liable for the taxes of 1820, viz. the sureties of *Thomas Witherspoon*, who was Sheriff for that year, and who remained in office until after the first of April 1821, and to whom the tax bills were then delivered, and the present Defendants, the sureties of *G. G. Witherspoon*. By thus remaining in office, until the right to collect began, *Thomas Witherspoon* was bound to settle with the Comptroller in October 1821, and although out of office,

is invested with various powers to enforce the collection of taxes. (*Acts of* 1801, *ch.* 570—1814, *ch.* 872—1819, *ch.* 999).

The County Court entertained a correct opinion of the orderly mode of proceeding, for they directed the tax bills to be delivered to the successor of *G. G. Witherspoon*, because he was in office when the tax became collectable; and the bills of 1820, were delivered to *Thomas Witherspoon*, because he was in office in 1821.

The act of 1819 can only mean, that the Sheriff then in office shall proceed to collect the taxes; not any one, who had been Sheriff during the preceding year; for then if there had been several, which shall be selected? By confining it to this period, much confusion is avoided; and though the Sheriff should not be re-elected, or should resign immediately after his election, he may proceed nevertheless to collect the taxes, that the public may be secured, and his sureties indemnified. I am therefore of opinion that the judgment appealed from was correct.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

David Dickey, Chairman,
v.
John H. Alley, et al.
} From Burke.

A Sheriff who was elected in January, 1820, and to whom before the 1st of April ensuing, the tax lists for 1819, were delivered, is bound for their collection.

If a Sheriff is elected after the 1st of April, and voluntarily receives from his predecessor the tax lists then collectable, is he bound to collect them. Qu?

DEBT upon the official bond of *Frederick F. Alley*, Sheriff of Rutherford, dated the 12th of January, 1820, with a condition that he should collect the "County taxes due for the year 1819." The breach assigned was the non-payment of those taxes. *Alley* was re-elected Sheriff at the date of the bond, having held the office for

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the preceding year. The tax lists for the year 1819, were delivered to him sometime between his re-appointment in January, 1820, and the 1st of April ensuing.

Upon this evidence, his honor Judge NORWOOD, thinking that the Defendants were not bound for the taxes of 1819 directed a nonsuit, from which the Plaintiff appealed.

No counsel appeared for the Plaintiff.

The cause was submitted by *Wilson*, for the Defendants.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The acts of Assembly which regulate the collection of the revenue, are rather obscure, and in some points apparently contradictory. But I believe they are capable of being reconciled. A full exposition of them was given by the Chief-Justice a few terms ago, in the case of *Fitts* v. *Hawkins*, (2 *Hawks* 394). I would only add to that case, that it is the duty of the Sheriff who is in office, on or after the first day of April in each year, during the time that the taxes are collectable, to collect those then due, *provided the lists are delivered to him*. I believe I shall be better understood by stating a case or two. A is in office on the first day of April; he goes out on the first day of May. The list of taxes due on the first day of April, have been delivered to him, either before the first day of April, or before the first day of May, that is while in office, he is bound to collect those taxes; where the lists have not been delivered to him, he is not bound. A is appointed to office at any time during the period, in which the taxes are collectable, say on the first day of May. The lists for taxes then collectable, due on the first day of the preceding April, are delivered to him, not having been delivered to his predecessor, he is also bound to collect them.—Should they have been delivered to his predecessor, I do not think that he is bound to receive them; but should he do so, I think that he is bound to collect them. For he may receive and execute process which his predeces-

sor delivers over to him, and I can see no reason, why he cannot receive the tax lists. Should he be re-appointed during the time of collection, say in May, he continues to collect under his former appointment, because, unless in cases of necessity, the act shall be entire, for it would be very inconvenient to divide it. Great difficulty would arise in ascertaining how much to charge to one set of sureties, and how much to another; And the law, to avoid confusion, during the time the taxes are collectable, that is, before the day of the Sheriff's accountability, gives him power to collect them, although his office may expire before that period. I wish it understood, that I am not satisfied on the point mentioned above, as to the liability of the new Sheriff, if he should take the lists from the old Sheriff, who was in office on the first day of April. I mention it that the point may be settled. I know of no adjudication on the subject.

In this case, *Alley* being in office on the first day of April, and the tax lists having been delivered to him, he was bound to collect the taxes due in 1819.

Taylor Chief-Justice.—According to the view taken of the subject in *Lenoir* v. *Wellborn*, (*ante* 452) I apprehend that the Defendants are liable for the taxes of 1819, as well because their bond so stipulates, as because *Alley* was in office in 1820, when the taxes became collectable, and was consequently bound to collect them. As *Alley* had also been Sheriff for the year 1819, the more regular way would have been for him to give a bond, at the time of his appointment, for the collection of the taxes; but there is no reason why a bond subsequently given, conditioned to do that, which the law had previously imposed upon him as a duty, should not be obligatory.—The nonsuit ought to be set aside.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed.

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John Granbery, executor of John H. Frazier
v.
James G. Mhoon, et ux.
} From Northampton.

A judgment of the County Court, deciding who is executor of a will, is conclusive upon all other Courts, and cannot be examined, although it be erroneous.

Therefore a copy of the will need not be attached to the letters testamentary, or produced, when they are given in evidence.

Slaves of an infant *feme* pass to her husband, *jure marito*, although they were hired out by her guardian before the marriage, and the husband died during the term.

DETINUE for several slaves, tried before his honor Judge DANIEL, on the Fall circuit of 1827. The Plaintiff claimed as executor of *John H. Frazier*, and on the trial, produced the following instrument:

"It having been certified to us, that *John H. Frazier* "late &c. is dead, and having made his last will and "testament in writing, *a copy of which is hereunto an-* "*nexed*, and therein appointed *John Granbery* executor "thereof, who was duly qualified and took upon himself "the burthen and execution thereof. These are there- "fore to authorize and empower the said *J. G.* &c."

No copy of the will was annexed to the letters—neither was one offered in evidence.

It was objected by the Defendant that a copy of the will was a necessary part of the Plaintiff's title, and that the negroes in question, did not of course vest in him if *Frazier* had title, solely because he had proved the will and qualified as executor. His honor reserved the question, and the Plaintiff went on with his case, when it turned out that the slaves in dispute, were the property of one *Lucy Granbery*, a minor, and were on the first of January, 1820, hired out by her guardian, for one year. In April, 1820, *Lucy Granbery* intermarried with the Plaintiff's testator, who died in the month of August following, leaving his wife surviving. The negroes never

were in the actual possession of the Plaintiff's testator, but continued in that of the persons who had hired them from the guardian of the wife, in January previous.

The Defendant, *Mhoon*, intermarried with the widow of the Plaintiff's testator.

His Honor instructed the Jury, that upon these facts, the negroes never vested in the Plaintiff's testator, and that the Defendants were entitled to a verdict, which being returned accordingly, the Plaintiff appealed.

Gaston, for the Plaintiff.

Hogg & Badger, contra.

HENDERSON, Judge.—It is not controverted, that an executor derives all his powers from the will. But whether there is a will, and who is the executor thereof, are matters of ecclesiastical cognizance, and consequently, the decision of the Ecclesiastical Courts on the subject is conclusive. They adjudicate, that *this* is the will of A, and that B is the executor thereof; and when in other Courts, it is necessary that B should sustain the character of executor, that adjudication is conclusive. The will is therefore improper evidence of that fact; for that adjudication is the only evidence competent to prove it. Suppose from the words of the will, it is matter of doubt whether A or B is executor, and that Court should decide in favor of B. If the probate of that will should be offered in evidence in another Court, and the whole will, as well as the adjudication set forth, such other Court, whatever it might think upon the subject, would be bound to consider B as the executor. The will therefore was entirely unnecessary to be produced in Court; for whatever were its provisions, it could not affect the decision of the cause. The only question therefore, which can arise in this case in regard to the Plaintiff's character as executor, is this: do the letters testamentary, or the certificate offered in this case, prove that

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fact. I think that they do. It is a testimonial given by the Court, that they have adjudicated the Plaintiff to be the executor. It is wholly unnecessary to append a copy of the will to such a testimonial, for it can answer no purpose. It does not follow by any means, that this certificate, or letters testamentary, are the only means by which it can be shown, who is an executor. The adjudication can be proved by the production of the original records or minutes of the Court, if they are shown to be such, or a copy under the seal of the Court, (as I take this to be, not a bare certificate,) or by a sworn copy when offered to a jury as in this case, or by any other means, by which the proceedings in one Court are given in evidence in another, with this difference, when offered in evidence to the Court, as under a profert, the record must be in that form which proves itself, that is, the original proved to the Court to be such, or a copy under the seal of the Court.

The County Court in this State, to which has been transferred the probate of wills, stands in the place of the Ecclesiastical Court in England, and what has been said in regard to the latter applies to the former.

As to the other point in this case. it falls completely within the case of *Whitaker* v. *Whitaker*, decided at the last term, (*ante* 310). The Plaintiff is therefore entitled to a new trial. The Defendant is not entitled to a nonsuit, for the evidence was properly received.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

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Wilson B. Hodges, administrator of John Marriner
v.
Henry N. Jasper.
} From Washington.

The Court in which an issue of *devisavit vel non* was finally tried, is the proper one in which to demand a reprobate, and where the trial was in the Superior Court, a demand of reprobate in the County Court was held to be erroneous.

This was an issue of *devisavit vel non*. On the trial it appeared that the supposed will had been offered for probate at the October term, 1804, of Tyrrell County Court, when an issue was made up, which by appeal was finally tried in the Superior Court, for the District of Edenton, where the will was established. It remained undisturbed until the Spring term, 1819, of Chowan Superior Court, when the Defendant in the present issue, filed a petition for a reprobate, upon which, at Spring term, 1821, BADGER, Judge, set aside the former probate, and directed an issue of *devisavit vel non* to be tried in that Court. On the next Spring circuit, PAXTON, Judge, thinking that the Superior Court of Chowan had not jurisdiction to try the issue, set aside that part of the former order directing the trial to be had in that Court. The supposed will was then offered for probate in Tyrrell County Court, when the present issue was made up, tried, and carried by appeal to the Superior Court, and then removed to Washington.

Before the trial in the Court below, the Defendant insisted that the County Court of Tyrrell had no jurisdiction to take the probate, but that it should have been demanded in the Superior Court of Chowan, where the record of the former trial remained. His honor Judge DONNELL reserved the point, but did not decide it as the Defendant obtained a verdict. The cause came here on the appeal of the Plaintiff, upon other points which it is unnecessary to notice.

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Badger, for the Plaintiff, insisted that the County Court of Tyrrell had no jurisdiction: the verdict in the Superior Court of the district of Edenton, was the probate, and the reprobate ought to be had where the first probate was taken. In answer to the objection that the want of jurisdiction did not appear upon the record, he replied the Defendant had brought it forward, and could not now object to its non-appearance.

Gaston & Hogg, for the Defendant, contended, that the objection to the jurisdiction was not well founded. The County Court had a general jurisdiction over the subject matter, and that the only thing which could oust that jurisdiction was the appeal to the Superior Court, and as the proceedings in that Court were set aside, the County Court was remitted to its general jurisdiction.

PER CURIAM.—The demand of probate must be dismissed; for that it should have been made in Chowan Superior Court, as the Court in which the will was established. It was the judgment of that Court, to which the case was regularly removed, that established it, and not the judgment of the Court in which it was first offered for probate; the judgment of the latter was vacated or annulled by the appeal. It would have been desirable to the Court, that the parties should have agreed between themselves, on some county for the trial of the matter in controversy, to prevent a further accumulation of costs, and we have accordingly advised it to them; but as they have not accommodated it, we are constrained reluctantly to render the above judgment.

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Robert H. Smith
v.
William B. Shepard,
} From Perquimons.

If a question of law be improperly submitted to a Jury, and they decide it correctly, a new trial will not be granted.

The obligor must show, either that he has fully complied with the condition of his bond, or has offered to do so. Therefore a condition to convey an equal and fair portion, a half of a certain tract of land belonging to the obligor, is not performed by an offer to convey a certain tract by metes and bounds, without proof of title, or the fairness of the division. Neither is the condition performed by an offer to convey an undivided interest less in quantity.

If damages are given beyond the penalty, and that is the only error on the record, the judgment will be reversed as to the excess alone.

DEBT upon a bond for three thousand dollars, dated April 21st, 1824, with the following condition: "that "*W. B. Shepard* shall as soon as the thing is practica- "ble, and the situation of the country will admit, convey "in fee simple, to *R. H. Smith*, one equal and fair por- "tion, a half of a tract of land of three thousand acres "belonging to said *Shepard*, and lying on Obian River, "in the State of Tennessee.

The pleas were "conditions performed and not broken, and tender and refusal."

On the trial, the Defendant proved the tender of two deeds to the Plaintiff, before the commencement of the action. The first dated the 8th of March, 1825, assured to the Plaintiff in fee, a tract of land "lying and being in the State of Tennessee, in the county of Weakly, on the middle branch of the south fork of the Obian River, being a part of two patents granted to *John G.* and *Thomas Blount*. Beginning &c. containing 1500 acres."

By the second deed, dated 18th of April, 1825, a tract of land was conveyed to the Plaintiff in fee, described as "one undivided half of the ninth part of a tract of land, in the State of Tennessee, beginning at &c. on the

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south fork of Obian River, running thence, &c. containing by estimation, twenty-four thousand acres."

It was in proof that the Defendant had title to one-ninth of the land described in the last recited deed, that the land had been identified before the summer of 1824, and that the county of Weakly, within which the land was situate, had been established at that time, and Courts of Justice opened therein.

His honor Judge MARTIN, left it to the Jury to determine whether the tender of the deeds was in substance and effect, a tender of such a conveyance as was required by the condition of the bond, and informed them they were to enquire into the value of the land, and were at liberty to give interest upon that value, provided it did not, with the damages, exceed the penalty of the bond. The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, to the amount of the penalty, and gave interest thereon from the date of the writ, whereupon the Defendant appealed.

Gaston, for the Defendant, contended that there was manifest error in leaving it to the Jury to decide whether the deeds set forth in the case, were such conveyances as were required by the condition. He argued that this was a question of law, which should have been decided by the Judge.

He also insisted, that it was not the duty of the Defendant to tender the deed, but that it should have been prepared by the Plaintiff and tendered to the Defendant; for this he cited *Webb* v. *Bethel*, (1 *Lev.* 44)—*Esp. R.* 190.

Hogg & Badger, for the Plaintiff, admitted that the question as to the sufficiency of the deeds, had been improperly left to the Jury, but they insisted that the Jury having decided the question proposed to them correctly, there was no ground for a new trial. They then argued to prove, that by neither of the deeds tendered, had the Defendant complied with the condition of the bond.

HENDERSON, Judge.—I think very clearly, that the question, whether the deeds tendered were such as the condition of the bond required, was one of law; for what were the obligations of the Defendant, was a question of law, and the deeds being offered in performance of those obligations, the same tribunal therefore should decide both. What *ought* to be done, was a question of law; what *had* been done, one of fact. But as the Jury came to the proper conclusion, the Judge was right in refusing a new trial.

The bond required an equal and fair portion, a half of a tract of three thousand acres, *belonging to the said Shepard*, and lying on the Obion river, in the State of Tennessee. The deed of the 8th of March, 1825, was for fifteen hundred acres, lying in the State of Tennessee, in the county of Weakly, on the south fork of the Obion river, being part of two patents, granted, &c. This may be a part of the lands owned by *Shepard*, at the date of the bond, and it may be an equal and fair portion, a half of a tract of three thousand acres; but these facts do not appear. *Shepard* may not have owned the land at the date of the bond; it may not be the half of a 3000 acre tract, and if it is, it may not be an equal and fair portion. It may be the most inferior part, *Non constat* therefore, that the obligations of the bond were offered to be performed. As to the deed of the 18th of April, 1825, it is still more defective. It is deficient in quantity, and it has all the defects before pointed out, except that as tenant in common, the grantee would be entitled to a fair partition. It is for one-half of one-ninth of 24,000 acres, less by nearly one hundred and sixty acres than *Shepard* was bound to convey.

But as the Jury assessed the damages beyond the penalty of the bond, and as a judgment has been rendered according to the verdict, the judgment must be reversed as such excess in damages. The judgment therefore is, that the Plaintiff recover three thousand dollars, with

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interest thereon from the rendition of the judgment in the Court below, with costs of that Court. This Court having reversed in part the judgment of the Superior Court, the Plaintiff must pay the costs here.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

Atha Lindsey
v.
Bartholomew Lee,
} From Johnston.

New trials for surprise, can only be granted in the Superior Courts, and a refusal to grant one, being the exercise of a discretionary power, cannot be examined upon appeal.

Notice to a particular agent to take the deposition of a non-resident witness to be read absolutely, is not supported by a rule authorising notice to that agent to take the deposition of the same witness *de bene esse*, the witness being at the granting of the rule a resident of this State.

This was an issue of *Devisavit vel non*, as to the supposed will of one *Burchet Lee*. The cause originated in Sampson, and had been removed to Johnston.

On the trial, the Plaintiff offered to read absolutely the deposition of one *John Lindsey*, taken in the State of Tennessee, which was objected to by the Defendant, as the notice of taking it had not been served upon him, but upon one *Caleb Lindsey*, who was no party to the suit. In order to justify the notice to *Caleb Lindsey*, the Plaintiff produced the following rule of Sampson Superior Court: "*Ordered*, that a commission issue to take the deposition of *John Lindsey*, on giving *Caleb Lindsey* twenty days notice. Deposition to be read *de bene esse*." But his honor Judge MARTIN, thinking that the order was intended for taking the deposition of a resident witness, to be read only *de bene esse*, and not that of a witness residing in another State, to be read absolutely, rejected the deposition. Whereupon, the Plaintiff submitted to a verdict against him, *John Lindsey* being the subscribing

witness, and moved for a new trial—1st, on the ground of surprise, and 2dly, because of error in rejecting the deposition. His honor discharged the rule, and the Plaintiff appealed.

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Lindsey v. Lee.

W. H. Haywood, for the Plaintiff.

Badger, contra.

HENDERSON, Judge.—It is argued, that the judgment in this case be reversed, 1st, on the ground of surprise. 2dly, Because the deposition of *John Lindsey* was improperly excluded.

Upon the first ground, this Court cannot act; it is matter addressed to the discretion of the Judge below, over which we have no control. As to the second ground, we concur in the opinion of the Judge, that the deposition ought to be rejected. Notice to take it ought to have been served on the parties, or on their agent. It does not appear that *Caleb Lindsey* was either their general agent, or agent to receive notice to take this, or any other deposition, except that of *John Lindsey*, *de bene esse*, under a rule made in Sampson Superior Court while the cause was there. This rule was special, and contemplated the taking of a deposition of another character, and at a different time and place from the one offered.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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Carr Darden
v.
Wright Allen. } From Hertford.

In detinue, if the Defendant relies upon his possession either as a bar to the action, or as a part of his title, the burthen of proving its length lies upon him.

Every possession is presumed to be upon the title, and for the benefit of the possessor, and he who avers the contrary, takes the burthen of proof.

No length of possession in a bailee, will either destroy the title, or bar the action of the bailor.

DETINUE for several slaves, tried before his honor Judge RUFFIN, on the last circuit. The Defendant pleaded *non detinet* and the Statute of Limitations.

The writ issued on the 1st of October, 1825, and on the trial the case was, that the slaves, being a woman and four small children, belonged to one *Robert Flinn*, who died in September, 1820. In November ensuing, letters of administration upon the estate of *Flinn*, issued to the Plaiutiff, who took the slaves into his possession, and kept them until January, 1822, when they were placed by him with one *Wiggins*, to be kept for the year 1822, at a stipulated price. *Martha Flinn*, who was the widow of the Plaintiff's intestate, and the sister of *Wiggins*, resided with the latter during that year. In the fall of the year 1822, *Martha Flinn* left her brother's, and went to reside on her own plantation, in the neighborhood. Early in the year 1823, the slaves in dispute, were in the actual possession of *Martha Flinn*, and so continued until July, 1825, when they were found in the possession of the Defendant. On the 20th of September, 1825, the Plaintiff demanded the slaves of the Defendant who refused to give them up, alleging that he had bought them from *Martha Flinn*, and declaring that he should hold them as his own. It did not appear with certainty, at what time *Martha Flinn* left her brother's house and took the slaves into her pos-

session. The Defendant contended, that it was before the 1st day of October, 1822, and the Plaintiff, that it was after. Both parties called witnesses to this point; those called by the Defendant, stated that it was in the fall of 1822, but whether in the month of September, October or November, none of them could say. The witnesses called by the Plaintiff, stated that the negroes remained with *Wiggins* until January, 1823, when the Plaintiff settled with him for keeping them, the year then passed, and advised *Martha Flinn*, who was present, to take them home with her, and keep them herself for him, which she agreed to do.

His Honor instructed the Jury, that an adverse possession continued for three years, would not only bar the Plaintiff's right of action, but extinguish his title to the slaves. But that the Plaintiff's original right ought to prevail, unless the Defendant showed such adverse possession in himself, or those under whom he claimed; and that the burthen of proving this length of possession, was on the Defendant, because he alleged it, either as a part of his title, or in bar of the Plaintiff's remedy, upon a clear and admitted previous right. The Jury were further instructed, that every possession is in law presumed to be on the title, and for the exclusive benefit of the possessor, until the contrary be shown—that if *Martha Flinn* did in fact, receive the slaves from the Plaintiff, or hold them upon a bargain made by him with her, then her possession was not adverse to the Plaintiff, but under him, and for his benefit—and although this possession might continue for more than three years, the Plaintiff would not thereby be defeated of his right of action, upon a demand and refusal: but that in relation to such a contract of bailment, the burthen of proof was upon the Plaintiff, who alleged it.

A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff. and the Defendant appealed.

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Darden v. Allen.

The cause was submitted without argument, by *Hogg*, for the Plaintiff. No Counsel appeared for the Defendant.

HENDERSON, Judge.—I think that the law was fully and correctly stated by the presiding Judge. No objection is made by the Defendant, to the charge on the first point; he objects to the second.

I cannot well conceive how a possession is lost by one person, unless it is gained by another; they are correlatives. If I lose my goods and they remain lost for twenty years, and are then found, I may maintain an action for them, and the finder will not be protected by the statute of limitations. So if my bailee possess my goods under the bailment for the same period of time, I can maintain an action against him; for I have not thereby lost my possession, his possession being my own. There must be a possession adverse to my title, before my possession is destroyed. I speak not here of that actual possession which the owner should have, to maintain trespass *vi et armis*, or to make the goods the subject of larceny; for peculiar reasons, actual possession in such cases is required. But I speak of that possession which is the *indicium* of title, and which is absolutely necessary to constitute in law a perfect one. The Judge was therefore perfectly correct in instructing the Jury, that title and possession having been shown to have been once in the Plaintiff, that possession continued until another arose in some other person; and that it was not incumbent on the Plaintiff to prove an actual possession in himself within three years next before suit brought, but that it was incumbent on the Defendant to show a divestment of that possession, by an adverse one in himself, or some other person, with which he could connect his possession.

The Judge was equally correct when he instructed the Jury, that every possession was presumed in law, to be

on the title, and for the exclusive benefit of the possessor until the contrary be shown and that a possession being shown in *Martha Flinn*, such possession was presumed to be for her benefit, and consequently adverse to the Plaintiff's right, until its fiduciary character was shown by the Plaintiff; and if so shown, no length of time would either bar the Plaintiff's action, or vest the title in the Defendant.

In using the expression "with some other person with whom he can connect his possession," I have yielded to the common understanding of the profession. But I wish not to be understood as expressing any opinion on the subject, as it is entirely unimportant in the present case.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

David Justice
v.
Thomas Cobbs & Sarah Jeter, } From Wake.

Where a parent puts a slave into the possession of a child, without an express parol gift, this possession is not adverse, and does not divest the title of the parent, or bar his action.

But it seems, that such a parol gift may be ripened into an indefeasible title, by a possession of three years.

What title is necessary to enable the Plaintiff to maintain detinue. Qu ?

DETINUE for a female slave. On the trial, the case was, that the slave had belonged to one *High*, whose daughter the Plaintiff had married. Upon the marriage of the Plaintiff, *High* sent the slave to his house, where she remained six or seven years, until the Plaintiff's daughter intermarried with one *Pullen*, since the year 1806, when she was sent to the House of the latter, where she remained for many years, and was used and claimed by him as his own. No bill of sale, or deed of gift from *High* to the Plaintiff, or from the Plaintiff to *Pullen*, was produced. It appeared that *High* died in the year 1813, having duly made his will—but none of its pro-

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visions were given in evidence. The Defendants claimed under *Pullen*, by a Sheriff's deed, with notice of the Plaintiff's title, and relied upon the possession of *Pullen* under the act of 1820 (*Rev. ch.* 1055) and the Statute of Limitations.

His honor Judge MARTIN informed the Jury, that if the Plaintiff's title was derived from *High* by a parol gift, before the act of 1806, it was complete. That if so derived since that act, it was possessory only; but in either event, it was sufficient to enable the Plaintiff to maintain this action. As to the statute of limitations, the Judge instructed the Jury, that since the act of 1806, a parol gift of a slave operated as a bailment only; that in cases of bailment, the statute of limitations did not run until the termination of that contract, and that the fact, that the bailee claimed and used the property as his own, would not terminate the contract of bailment. And further, that if *Pullen* claimed by a loan or parol gift from the Plaintiff since the act of 1806, the Defendants claiming under him with notice of the Plaintiff's title, were estopped to deny it.

The Jury returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, and the Defendants appealed.

Gaston, Devereux & W. H. Haywood, for the Defendants, contended,

1. That since the act of 1806, a parol gift transfers no title, general or special, to the donee, and therefore that *Justice* had not such an interest as would enable him to maintain this action. For this they cited *Bull. N. P.* 50. 2 *Starkie's Ev.* 4 *part*, 493. *Com. Dig. Detinue A*, and commented upon the cases of *Wilbraham* v. *Snow*, (1 *Mod.* 30. 1 *Lev.* 282, *S. C.* 1 *Vent.* 52, *S. C.*) and *Ayer* v. *Aden*, (*Yelv.* 44, *Cro. J.* 73, *S. C.* 2 *Sand.* 47, *S. C.*) which are cited by *Bacon*, (*Detinue A.*) and *Danvers*, (*Detinue C. pl.* 6) for the contrary, and endeavoured to prove that those cases had been misconceived.

2. That the Plaintiff was barred by the statute of limitations. For this they cited *Elmore* v. *Mills* (1 *Hay.* 360) *Whitbeck* v. *Deyo* (3 *John. Rep.* 422) *Roe ex dem. of Pellatt* v. *Ferrars* (2 *B. & P*, 542) 18 *East* 209.

3. That no estate passed to the Defendants, to which an estoppel was annexed. For which was cited *Bacon, Bailment A. Rolls' Ab.* 607.

Badger, for the Plaintiff, submitted the cause without argument.

HALL, Judge.—It is not a very easy task to lay down a general rule, to decide what special rights in property will support this action, nor is it necessary in this case. The Judge properly stated to the Jury, that if the parol gift to *Justice*, was prior to the act of 1806 (*Rev. ch.* 701) it was good. I concur with him too in saying, that if it was since, *circumstanced as this case is*, *Justice* can sustain this action.

High, who was the owner of the property in dispute, died in the year 1813. If he made no will, *Justice* was entitled to the slave as an advancement, under the act of 1806. If he made a will, as it appears he did, though it has not been given in evidence, it is likely that he either confirmed the title of the property in *Justice*, or bequeathed it to some other person. If the latter is the fact, *Justice*, and *Pullen*, claiming under him, have held the property adverse to such person for many years. So that in either event, the Jury were authorised to infer a title in *Justice*, which, accompanied with possession, is sufficient to support this action.

As to the statute of limitations, it can be no bar in favor of *Pullen*. He held the property, both in *fact*, and in *law*, under *Justice*. The act of 1826 declares, that "when any person shall have put into the possession of his child any slave, &c. which shall remain in possession of such child, at the time of the death of such donor, such slave shall be considered as an advancement

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to such child." The object of the act would be defeated, if the child's possession could be ripened into title, by a continuance of three years.

But if an express parol gift was proved by *Pullen*, it would seem, that a three years adverse possession would complete his title. But I give no opinion on this point, as the case does not require it. No gift is proved to *Pullen*; he relies upon an implied one, arising from possession.

As to the estoppel spoken of on the Defendants, it may be observed, that whether they had notice or not, they could not have a better title than *Pullen* himself had, as long as they claimed under him. The only difference between them would be, that the Defendant's right, although it would not be better than *Pullen's* when first derived from him, yet might be ripened into title, by an adverse possession of sufficient length, whether they had notice of *Justice's* title or not.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

George Bird
v.
Samuel J. Ross.
} From Rutherford.

An accountable receipt for a judgment under seal, which vests the equitable title in the receiver, in law only binds him to pay what he receives on it.

Upon such an assignment, if the assignee gives the full value, and has no day of payment, without an agreement to the contrary, the assignor guaranties that the judgment can be collected. But if less than the amount is given, or day of payment had, the assignor only guaranties the existence of the judgment.

Covenant upon the following instrument, on which a credit of seven hundred dollars was endorsed:

"April 10th, 1822, received of *George Bird*, an order to the Sheriff "of Rutherford county, for the amount of *Peter Fisher's* judgment, "that he obtained for *Mark Bird*, deceased, for thirteen hundred dol- "lars, and for six months interest, which we will account for.

"ARTHUR CLARKE, [L. S.]
"SAMUEL J. ROSS, [L. S.]"

The statement of the case was rendered exceedingly obscure by a transposition of some of the lines of the original, in making out the copy for this Court. It is inferred that an execution on the judgment mentioned in the above deed, had been levied on a tract of land called the High Shoals, which had belonged to *Peter Fisher*, and was alleged by the Plaintiff and Defendant to have been fraudulently conveyed to his son, *Jacob Fisher*—that an action of ejectment was prosecuted by the Defendant for that land, in the name of the heirs of *Mark Bird*, of whom the Plaintiff was one, and that if successful in the action, the Defendant was to have the land, and pay the residue of the judgment; otherwise it was to be lost by the Plaintiff; evidence of this kind, was offered to the Jury. The Plaintiff contended, that *Ross* either had received full satisfaction from *Fisher*, for the judgment, or had so fraudulently conducted the action of ejectment, as to prevent a recovery therein.

His honor Judge NORWOOD, however, instructed the Jury, that by the deed above set forth, an equitable title to the judgment mentioned in it, vested in *Clarke* & *Ross*, and that it gave them full authority to collect and recover the amount of it, and they were bound to pay the Plaintiff the balance of the judgment, whether they collected it or not. A verdict was returned for the Plaintiff, and the Defendant appealed.

Hogg, for the Appellant.

Wilson, contra.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The deed of the 10th April, 1812, with the endorsement, is evidence that *Clarke* and *Ross* had become the equitable owners of the judgment. But it furnishes no evidence of the terms and conditions of the transfer. They are left to be implied by law, from the circumstances of the transaction. If *Clarke* and *Ross* advanced, or agreed to advance the full amount of the judgment with interest, without having a day of payment

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given to them, this imposed on *Bird* a guarantee that the money should, or might with reasonable exertions, be collected; for it is not to be presumed, that *Ross* and *Clarke* would pay, or agree to pay the full amount, without having day of payment given, or some such equivalent, and take upon themselves the risk of collection.—In such case therefore, the risk of collection must have been assumed by *Bird*, for the law always looks to the consideration, in raising the promise. If less than its amount was given, something like its market value, the law placed the risk on *Ross* and *Clarke*, for they had been paid for it in the reduction of the price. If that was the fact, they would be bound, whether they collected the money or not. The only obligation imposed on *Bird* was, that the money called for by the judgment was due, and I suppose that there was such a judgment. I think therefore, that the Judge erred, in informing the Jury that the Defendant was liable to pay the whole amount, whether he collected the money or not. In the absence of all evidence, as to the special price agreed to be paid for any article, the market value is the one which the law presumes to be understood, and fixes that as the price. But there is some evidence from which the Jury might properly come to a conclusion what was the agreement, viz. the after conduct of the parties. For although the conduct of the parties cannot be used to explain a contract, it is the best evidence to prove what that contract is. I think therefore, that there should be a new trial; for although the evidence might have satisfied the Jury that *Ross* had, or might have received the money, or was guilty of fraud, in not attending to the suit for the High Shoals, these are facts of which the Court can form no opinion. Possibly the Jury decided on the ground first mentioned by the Judge, in which we think there was error, and for that it must go before a Jury again.

Per Curiam.—Judgment reversed.

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John Washington, Chairman, &c
Upon the relation of R. H Jones,
v.
William Hunt, ex'r of Joseph Taylor.
} From Warren.

Creditors have a right to assign the non-payment of their debts, as a breach of the administration bond, and to put it in suit.

The rule of damages is the amount of the judgment against the administrator, where one has been obtained.

DEBT upon the bond given by one *John Brodie*, upon taking out letters of administration on the estate of one *Alexander Brodie*, to which bond the Defendant's testator was surety.

The condition of the administration bond was in the usual form, and the breach assigned was the non-payment of a debt due the relator by the intestate, upon which he had obtained a judgment against the administrator, and *nulla bona intestati* was returned.

After *oyer*, the Defendant pleaded performance of the condition.

Upon the trial, before MARTIN Judge, the Plaintiff produced the record of the suit between him and the administrator, in which the latter was fixed with assets, and from which it appeared that the original debt was secured by a bond for 1333⅓ dolls. to be void upon the payment of half that sum; but the verdict and judgment was for the penalty, as the interest had increased the debt to that amount.

The Jury, under the instruction of the presiding Judge, returned a verdict for the Plaintiff, for the full amount of the judgment against the administrator, with interest up to the trial, and the Defendant appealed.

Seawell, for the Defendant, contended, that the non-payment of a debt was not within the condition of the bond, and went into an elaborate examination of the

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law, as it stood before the statutes of *Edward I.* (*Westminster* 2) and of *Edward III.* and argued strenuously to prove, that the object of those acts was only to enable the Ordinary to collect the goods of intestates, and to enforce upon administrators the obligation of accounting with the Ordinary—that those statutes only gave the creditors the same right against the administrator, which they had before their passage against the Ordinary. He insisted that it was apparent, from the words of the statute of *Edward III.* that *Blackstone* was mistaken, when he says that this statute, and that of *Westminster* 2d, were passed for the purpose of correcting the flagrant abuses of the Ordinary; for the statute of *Edward III.* directs, that "when a man dieth intestate, the Ordinary shall depute, &c. which deputies shall have an action to demand, &c. in like manner as executors, the debts due the estate, &c. for to administer and dispense for the soul of the dead, and shall answer as executors shall answer to creditors, and shall be accountable to the Ordinaries, as executors are accountable in case of a testament." To prove this, he cited *Gransbrook* v. *Fox* (1 *Plowden* 276).

He insisted, that after dispensing for the *good of the soul*, which meant the payment of the debts, the remainder was to be accounted for to the Ordinary, to be distributed by him among the next of kin, and that the sole object of the bond taken before the statute of distributions (22 & 23 *Charles II.*) was to enable the Ordinary to make distribution. To prove this, he cited *Edwards* v. *Freeman* (2 *P. W.* 435, 442, 448.)

2. The Counsel then insisted, that creditors in England could not take an assignment of the bond required by the stat. 22 & 23 *Cha.* 2, to be given by an administrator, and sue upon it for non-payment of their debts. That the only exception to be found in the books, was the case of the *Archbishop of Canterbury* v. *House* (*Cowper* 140) and that case was much weakened by

a decree which was produced before the Chancellor, in *Thomas* v. *Archbishop of Canterbury* (1 *Cox's Cases* 598, 401). From which it appeared, that the judgment obtained in the case in *Cowper*, was only to stand as a security for the costs at law and in equity—and the breach probably was, not returning an inventory. Upon this point was cited the above cases, and also *Archbishop of Canterbury* v. *Wills* (1 *Salk.* 315) *Wallis* v. *Pipon*, *Ambler* 183) *Ashley* v. *Baillie* (2 *Vesey* 368) *Greenside* v. *Benson*, (3 *Atk.* 242) as explained in 1 *Cox's Cases* 401.

It was then shown, that the bond required by our act of 1715, is exactly the same as that required by the 22 and 23 *Cha.* 2, and a decision of Judge McKAY at Hillsborough, not reported, was referred to as in point.

It was submitted, that the judgment could be rendered only for the penalty of the original bond, without interest thereon.

Gaston & Badger, on the other side, cited the *Governor* v. *Meilan* (2 *Law Repos.* 460) *The People* v. *Dunlap*, (13 *Johns. Rep.* 437) *Cony* v. *Williams* (9 *Mass. R.* 117, 1 *Washington's Rep.* 31). They relied much on the firm and well settled opinion of the Profession, that a creditor could assign the non-payment of his debt, as a breach of the administration bond, and insisted that the Legislature, in passing the act of 1807 (*Rev. ch.* 730) had expressly sanctioned this idea.

They submitted, that the Plaintiff was entitled to judgment for the amount of the verdict against the administrator, as the default consisted in the non-payment of that.

HENDERSON, Judge.—If we were now for the first time, putting a construction upon the act of 1715, requiring administrators, &c. to give bond, I think we should have but little doubt, that the bond required by that act, should be confined to the administration of the estate, so

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far only as regards the interest of the next of kin, that nothing could be assigned as a breach of it, but what tended to their injury: and that all the duties prescribed in the condition would be regarded as subservient to their claims, and not to those of creditors. If any doubts could have been raised upon the point, I think that they would have been removed by the very able and lucid historical argument of the counsel for the Defendant.—And notwithstanding the case of the *Archbishop of Canterbury* v. *House*, I think such is, and uniformly has been the rule in the English Courts, upon the statute of *Charles*. *Lord Holt*, very soon after its passage, declared that it did not extend to creditors, and that it was made for the benefit of the next of kin only. The cases of *Greenside* v. *Benson*, and *Thomas* v. *Archbishop of Canterbury*, fully shew what has since been the understanding of their Courts. As to the case of the *Archbishop of Canterbury* v. *House*, it does not appear from it, what was the breach assigned, although the bond had been delivered to a creditor, and he was carrying on the suit in the *Archbishop*'s name; for aught that appeared, it might be for an act in which the next of kin were concerned; the more especially, as otherwise we cannot reconcile what fell from *Lord Mansfield*, that he knew of no case or principle, which prohibited the Ordinary from delivering the bond to any person to sue upon, in his, the Ordinary's name, with the case of the *Archbishop of Canterbury* v. *Wills*, as it cannot for a moment be believed that he was ignorant of the opinion delivered by *Holt*, in that case.—But be this case as it may, it is in opposition to all that has gone before or has come after it, if from it we are to understand that the non-payment of a debt can be assigned as a breach of an administration bond. Upon principle, a satisfactory reason can be assigned why administrators should give bond to distribute among the next of kin, and executors should not, and also that as executors were not to give bond to pay the debts, *a fortiori*, administrators should not.

The legatee claims from the bounty and free will of the testator, and it is the testator that appoints the executor, thereby directing who is to pay the legacy. The legatee must take as the testator gives, and as the testator has made the selection to whom he will confide the management of his affairs, and not having thought proper to require surety of him to pay the legacies, it would seem very unfit that a legatee should demand it, unless in a case where there is a disposition manifested by the executor to waste the estate. In this case, a Court of Equity will compel the executor to give surety, but it is upon the ground that if the testator could have foreseen his unfaithfulness, he would not have committed the trust to him. On the other hand, an administrator is selected by the Court; the deceased had no hand in his appointment; the distributees do not claim from him as an agent appointed by the deceased, but one appointed by the Court. It is proper therefore, as he is put into his office by law, that the law should require surety that he will distribute according to law. As to the position, that as executors are not required to give bond to pay debts, *a fortiori* an administrator should not, I think it follows from this—a creditor claims not under the will or bounty of the testator. There is therefore no reason why he should be bound to acquiesce in the appointment which the debtor may think proper to make. There is no check upon the claim of the debtor as to whom he may select as his executor. He may appoint the most worthless man in the community, who is notwithstanding entitled by law to the executorship, and although it is true that a creditor may compel him, in a Court of Equity, to give surety for a faithful administration, yet that is an after thing, and affects not the principle. An Administrator, however, is appointed by the Court. It is true, that the choice is confined to the widow or next of kin, and if they refuse, to the creditors. Yet this affords some opportunity for a choice, and will generally enable the Or-

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dinary to make a more judicious selection than the most worthless man in the community, whom the testator may appoint executor, if he pleases. This is the fair way of stating the question. If either the one or the other should be exempt from giving surety for the payment of debts, I think it ought to be the administrator. But at any rate, this reason is sufficient for the purpose for which the subject was introduced, viz. to shew that the reasons are equal to compel both to give surety, or to require it from neither. However, as far back as we have any knowledge of the construction put upon the act of 1715, with the exception of one case at Hillsborough, before Judge McKAY, it has uniformly been considered by all persons, the people, the bar, the bench, and the legislature, that the non-payment of a debt was a breach of an administration bond. The Legislature has so considered it independently of, and long before the act of 1807, requiring executors in certain cases to give bond, where a very plain opinion is expressed, that administrators were bound by their bond to pay the debts out of the assets; for the construction put upon these bonds, was a matter of notoriety, and they did not interfere.

After such an uniform opinion upon the subject for such a length of time, it would be the height of impropriety, to give a different construction to the act. It would unsettle and render insecure too much property. In some cases this may be our duty, where the misconception is glaringly and manifestly wrong. But in this case it is not so; the breach by the non-payment of a debt, is within the words of the bond, without a very shrewd construction. The words are, "*and the goods and chattels, which shall come, &c. do well and truly administer according to law*" And to shew that a mal-administration of the assets by failing to pay creditors, is not within these words, we are under the necessity of going into a long historical argument, which may possibly lead us to a wrong conclusion. When we see the long and uniform

custom of the country, so well, at least so firmly established as this is, we have no moral right to disturb it, although we should be of opinion, that the words were not originally correctly understood. June 1828. Crow v. Holland.

The judgment should be for the debt recovered in the original suit, with interest to the time of rendering the judgment in this case, in the Court below. The failure to pay that sum, when thus judicially ascertained, was the default imputed to the administrator, and which he having assets, ought to have paid; also the costs of that suit, but not with interest thereon, for Plaintiff did not show that he had paid them.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

John Crow
v.
The heirs of James Holland, } From Haywood.

Fraud which vacates a grant, being a compound question of law and of fact, a general verdict that a grant was fraudulently obtained, is not sufficient foundation for a judgment of repeal.

This was a petition to vacate a grant which issued to the ancestor of the Defendants, upon the ground that it had been fraudulently obtained. The matters alleged in the petition were:

1. That the land had been surveyed by one *Avery* for himself—that one *Walker* fraudulently obtained possession of *Avery's* field notes, and made sundry entries from them, for himself—that he gave the ancestor of the Defendants, the warrant and the survey upon which the grant sought to be vacated had issued, in consideration of aid rendered to him in defrauding *Avery*.

2. That the survey upon which the grant issued, was never actually made by *Walker*, but was only signed by him as a Deputy Surveyor—that this was known to the grantee, when he sued out the grant.

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3. That the survey, upon its face, appeared to have been made by *Walker* for himself.

These facts were all put in issue by the answer, and on the trial, testimony was offered to the Jury by both parties.

His honor Judge DANIEL informed the Jury, that if the survey upon which the grant issued was never actually made, as required by law, and this fact was known to the grantee when he received it, such conduct was a fraud upon the State, and vitiated the grant; and also, that if the survey was made by *Walker* for himself, and this fact was known to the grantee when he sued out the grant, it was a fraud upon the land laws, which likewise vitiated the grant.—The Jury returned a general verdict for the Petitioner, and the Defendants appealed.

The case was argued by *Wilson & Badger*, for the Plaintiff, and *Gaston*, for the Defendants; but the argument was upon points different from those on which it was decided.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The grant is sought to be set aside, on the ground that it was obtained by means of several fraudulent acts, which are particularly stated in the petition, and the Jury have found that it was obtained by fraud. This may be an inference they have drawn, from some of the facts alleged in the petition, having been proved, but is not a necessary implication that it arises from the proof of all of them. Fraud is a compound question of law and fact. The facts going to establish it, are to be decided by a Jury. Whether, when proved, they will amount to such a fraud as will vacate a grant is a question for the Court to decide.—Were this grant to be set aside on this general finding, it would be deciding in the dark; for we have no means of ascertaining of what the fraud found by the Jury consisted, and the Court ought to have a full assurance that

the grant was fraudulently obtained, before it was vacated. The issues ought to be tried again, and the specific facts constituting the fraud ascertained by the Jury, who may infer fraud; but then the Court will be enabled to determine whether it be so in point of law.

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Bedell v. State Bank.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

Mott Bedell
v.
The President & Directors of the State Bank, } From Wake.

Notice to take a deposition on a particular day of every week for three successive months, is insufficient.

ASSUMPSIT, and upon the trial, the Plaintiff offered to read the deposition of one *Richard Bedell*. The notice to the Defendant was, that the deposition would be taken "on the Saturday of every week in July, August & September, at, &c. in the city of New-York." His honor Judge DANIEL rejected the deposition, thinking the notice too vague, although the Plaintiff proved that the witness was a seafaring man, and that it was impossible to give notice, with any certainty, of a particular day when he would be in New-York, or in any other seaport.

The Plaintiff was nonsuited, and appealed.

Devereux, for the Plaintiff.

Badger, contra.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—It is impossible to consider a notice of this kind sufficient, without opening a door to abuses of the most mischievous tendency. Testimony by depositions, is at best, inferior to that by witnesses, and ought to be so guarded, that the Court may have every reasonable assurance of its truth. Under a vague notice of this kind, a man might be kept three months

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from home, if the witness did not appear till the last Saturday in September. The utmost extent which has yet been allowed, is one week, where the deposition was to be taken at a great distance from the residence of the parties.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

The President & Directors of the State Bank
v.
Wm. Wilson & James Parker. } From Gates.

The declarations of a creditor, or of his general agent, that his debt is discharged, is *prima facie* evidence of payment.

Mere delay of the holder in collecting a note, will not discharge an endorser, who has been duly fixed with the payment. But if the holder, by a new contract, varies the obligation of the maker, and prevents the endorser from having immediate recourse against him, upon paying the debt, and taking an assignment of the security, he discharges the endorser.

At law, an endorser has the same right to an assignment of a judgment against the maker on the note, that he has to the note itself.

ASSUMPSIT upon the endorsement by the Defendants, of the promissory note of one *William T. Muse*, for 4700 dollars, which had been discounted at the office of the Plaintiffs, in Edenton. The defence was upon the general issue, and the following facts were in evidence.—That *Muse* died in Pasquotank county, in July, 1823, that at the next term, one *John B. Blount*, who was the Cashier of the Plaintiffs at the Edenton Branch, proved his will, and qualified as executor thereof—that at March term, 1824, of Chowan County Court, *Blount* confessed a judgment to the Plaintiffs for the principal and interest of the note—that writs of *fi. fa.* issued on that judgment, and were directed to the Sheriff of Chowan, from every term until that of December, 1824, but none of the writs appeared to have been delivered to the Sheriff—

from December term, 1824, a *fi. fa.* issued to the Sheriff of Pasquotank, who returned "no property to be found but such as was sold under other and older executions." The Defendants called upon *J. B. Skinner, Esq.* who proved that on the 1st of January, 1825, the Defendant *Wilson* came from Pasquotank to see him, at his residence in Edenton, and informed him of his endorsement of *Muse's* note, then held by the Plaintiffs, and of his great uneasiness about it, because *Blount* had advertised the negroes belonging to the estate of *Muse* for sale, in Pasquotank, on the 13th of that month, and that he feared, unless execution was issued, and satisfaction obtained out of the negroes, before the sale by the executor, that the executor *Blount*, would waste the assets, and he, *Wilson*, be finally compelled to pay and lose the debt—that *Skinner* having the money, agreed to advance *Wilson* cash sufficient to take up the debt, and advised the Defendant *Wilson* to do so, and take an assignment of the judgment. That on the same day, the witness and *Wilson* went to the office of the Plaintiffs in Edenton, and informed *Blount*, the Cashier, of the object of *Wilson*, and then offered to pay the debt, and take an assignment of the judgment, if it was not already satisfied; to which *Blount* replied that this was unnecessary, as the debt would be settled in a few days, the Plaintiffs having agreed to take in payment of it, notes which would be received upon the sale of the negroes then advertised. That the witness and *Wilson*, not being satisfied with this assurance, insisted upon *Blount's* calling a meeting of the Directors, at which *Skinner*, who was a Director, made a full statement of the views of *Wilson*, and offered for him then to pay the amount of the judgment and take an assignment of it—that the Directors seemed anxious to prevent a sacrifice of *Muse's* estate, by selling the negroes for cash, and expressed their willingness to receive notes from *Blount*, for the debt—and they proposed, that instead of making an assignment to *Wilson*, a *fi. fa.* should issue to Pasquotank,

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that one of the Directors should attend the sale, and receive in satisfaction of the judgment, notes which might be taken at it; with which arrangement, the Defendant *Wilson*, was satisfied.

The Defendant then called the Sheriff of Pasquotank, who proved that *Muse* left a large estate—that *Blount*, his executor, in January, 1825, sold slaves which had belonged to his testator, to the amount of 14,500 dollars—that the sale was upon a credit, and for notes negotiable at the office of the Plaintiffs in Edenton—that *Blount* conducted the sale, and that the member of the Board of Directors, alluded to at the meeting in Edenton, was present—that the notes were taken by *Blount*, with the knowledge and consent of that gentleman—that the execution upon the judgment in favour of the Plaintiffs, was not delivered to him before, or at the sale, nor ever in Pasquotank county, nor did he hear thereof until some weeks after it—that at the time of the sale, he had sundry *fi. fa's.* against *Blount* as executor, on which was due a balance of six or seven thousand dollars, and which were levied on the slaves—that at the request of *Blount*, he relinquished the levy, and some days thereafter went to Edenton, when *Blount* paid him the amount of the *fi. fa's;* there he first received the execution on the judgment for this debt, and was directed to make the return of *nulla bona testatoris*. The witness further proved, that in the evening of the day when *Muse's* negroes were sold, one of the Defendants asked the Director who attended the sale, what was done with this debt, or whether it was satisfied? To which he replied, you are safe, for the Bank has agreed to take notes of *Blount*—some have been submitted to, and approved by the Board, and *Blount* is now taking others, which will cover the balance.

Mr. Skinner was again called, and proved, that in May or June, 1825, he, on behalf of the Defendant *Wilson*, applied at the Bank, to learn the situation of the debt for

which the Defendants were bound, believing that *Blount* could pay the debt, if it was then placed under their control, which the witness was willing to effect, by advancing the money for their benefit. That to his enquiry, what was the situation of the debt, and whether the endorsers were discharged? he was answered by the Cashier, *Blount*, that they were—the debt having been paid by him, and the whole business settled. It was proved by *Mr. Creecy*, the book-keeper of the Plaintiff, that neither cash or notes had been paid into the Bank on account of the debt by *Blount*—and he further stated, that the Cashier was the only person who could receive cash, and grant acquittances for debts due the Bank—that no Director had this power, and that the Cashier was the general agent of the corporation. The witness also proved, that some time in the summer of the year 1825, the Defendant *Wilson* came to the Bank, and asked *Blount* what had been done with this note, and whether the debt had been settled, to which the Cashier replied "it is paid, and you are discharged,"—that as soon as the Defendant had gone out, the witness asked *Blount* "if the debt was settled, why not make the entries accordingly;" to which *Blount* replied, "it is done, or it will or shall be done, which is the same thing, and then the entries can be made."

Blount died insolvent, and this suit was commenced in March, 1826.

His honor Judge RUFFIN charged the Jury, "that, in point of law, the declaration of a creditor, that a debt to him was paid, was *prima facie* evidence of that fact, and that the declaration to the same import of a general agent, such as the Cashier had been represented by the witness *Creecy* to be, was within the scope of his authority, and would have the like operation with that of the principal himself. That in this case, the Jury were at liberty to infer the payment of the debt from the express words of

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the said *Blount*, unless that inference of fact should be repelled, in their opinion, by the testimony of *Creecy*; in which latter case, they could not find for the Defendant, upon the ground of an actual payment. And in that event, it would be necessary for the Jury to consider the other points of defence, arising out of the testimony. In relation to that insisted on, by reason of time having been given by the Plaintiff to *John G. Blount*, it was not true, that every giving of time by the holder of a note to the maker, would discharge the endorsers. Nor was it generally true, but was so, only under particular circumstances, and in a certain sense. On the contrary, the general rule was, that after the holder had, by due diligence in demanding payment from the maker, and giving notice to the endorser of non-payment, *fixed* the endorser, the contract of the endorser being separate and distinct from that of the maker, his obligation to pay became likewise independent, and the holder was not compelled to proceed further against the maker, but might sue the endorser alone. That in this case therefore, the Plaintiff was not bound to sue *Blount* in the first instance, nor were the Defendants discharged by the mere delay of the Bank in not suing the maker, or his executor, sooner; nor by not taking out execution on the judgment after it was obtained; nor by the Bank merely not proceeding on the execution; nor by any other mere delay of the Plaintiff to compel payment by *Blount*. But although such was the general rule of law, yet the endorser had certain rights, arising out of the relations of the parties to the note, which the holders must take care not to interfere with, by altering those relations to the prejudice of the endorsers. That one of those rights, for instance, was that of the endorsers to *ultimate* recourse against the maker, after the former should have taken up the note from the holder. And therefore, if the holder released the maker, or compounded the debt, by taking from the maker a new security, in satisfaction of the first

note, these acts would discharge the endorsers. That another of these rights was that of the endorser to demand, at any time, of the holder to receive payment from the endorser, and to surrender to him the security, in such a situation as to enable the endorser to have *immediate* recourse to the maker; and therefore, if the holder, by way of compounding with the maker, or by any other new and independent contract with him, enlarged the time of payment for a definite period, before the expiration of which the maker could not be sued on the note, or be compelled to pay the money due by reason of the note having been given, the holder must, in such case, look to the maker alone, on his new contract; for that by such acts, the endorser was discharged, seeing that thereby the remedy on the note against the maker was *suspended*, and the right of the endorser instantly to enforce it interrupted. If therefore, in this case, there was, after the agreement of the Bank with *Wilson* to send an execution to Pasquotank, as stated by *Skinner*, a new agreement made between the Plaintiff and *Blount*, without the knowledge and concurrence of the endorsers, that the Bank should not sue out the execution, but forbear the whole debt for some definite time, *upon Blount's own engagement* to pay the debt with other promissory notes, and the Plaintiff trusting to such promise of *Blount*, and in consideration thereof, did not send out, but withheld the execution, and did forbear the said debt, that *such* a forbearance and giving of time, were a discharge to the endorsers, and the more especially, as in this case the witness proved (if believed) that the execution, if it had been sent out, would have been satisfied out of the slaves belonging to *Muse's* estate. The Court further stated to the Jury, that such an agreement had not been directly proved by any witness, in express terms, and therefore, if it existed at all, was to be collected by inference only from other facts proved, and that to the Jury it was left to draw or reject such inference of fact

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from the testimony. And the Court further instructed the Jury, that if they should not find such an agreement, as above supposed, yet that if an endorser, with the view of taking up a note, and securing himself against the maker, apply to the holder and inform him of his intention, and offer to pay the sum due on the note, and demand the note, or an assignment of a judgment on it, and the holder, knowing that it is not paid, inform the endorser that it is paid, and declare to him, that he (the endorser) is discharged, and that the holder will no longer look to the endorser, and refuses to deliver up the security, such acts and declarations of the holder do discharge the endorser; and that the declaration of such a general agent as the Cashier of a Bank (with the powers and authority said by the witness *Creecy* to belong to him) to the said *Skinner* and to the said *Wilson*, to the effect proved by the witnesses, would have the same effect, as if they had been made by the holder himself, being a natural person, though these declarations were false, in that the debt was not paid, unless the falsehood were known to the said *Wilson*, or his agent, and such declarations were made through collusion between the Defendants, or one of them, and said *Blount*, with intent to defraud his principal, the Plaintiff. For the law would throw the consequences of the fraud of the Plaintiff's agent not known to the endorser, upon the Plaintiff who employed him, and not on the innocent endorser, and the more especially in this case, since the said declarations, if found by the Jury to have been made, in one instance, were made to said *Skinner*, who was himself one of the Directors; and in the other instance, to the said *Wilson*, in the presence of *Creecy*, the Plaintiff's book-keeper, who at the same time knew it to be false, and did not so inform the Defendant."

A verdict was returned for the Defendants, and the Plaintiffs appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the appellants, and the cause was submitted without argument, by *Gaston*, for the Defendants.

PER CURIAM.—We think that the Jury were not misdirected by the Judge in his charge; the judgment must therefore be affirmed.

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A Jury when charged with the trial of a capital offence, cannot be discharged without returning a verdict, unless for some cause which human sagacity can neither foresee nor prevent.

Therefore, where a Jury were charged with the trial of a prisoner for murder, and before they returned their verdict, the term of the Court expired, and the Jury separated, it was held, that the prisoner could not be tried again.

The provision of the Constitution, that "no person shall be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb," not only forbids a second trial for the same offence after an acquittal, but also where the Jury have been once charged upon a perfect indictment, and were not prevented from returning a verdict by the act of God, or at the request of the prisoner.

The Chief-Justice issued a *Habeas Corpus* to bring the applicant before him, upon the following affidavit:

"*Robert Spier* maketh oath, that an indictment was found against him for the alleged crime of murder, at the Spring Term, 1827, of Beaufort Superior Court, which was traversed by this affiant, and at his instance, and upon his affidavit, the issue of traverse was removed to Craven Superior Court, for trial; that to insure a trial and the punctual attendance of all the witnesses, at the time of the said removal, general notice was given by directions of the Court, that the said trial would be had on the Wednesday of the next term of Craven Superior Court; that accordingly on that day, the case was called for trial, when upon the allegation of the Solicitor of the State, that the State was not ready, it was at the request of the Solicitor, postponed until the succeeding day, Thursday; that on Thursday, it was again at the request of the Solicitor, postponed until the next day, Friday; that on Friday, the Solicitor being required by the State to try or show

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satisfactory cause on affidavit for a continuance, a Jury was impannelled and sworn; that towards the night of Friday, by order of the Court, and by consent of the affiant and of the Solicitor for the State, the Jury was permitted to retire for the night, under the charge of officers sworn to keep them together; that on the succeding morning, Saturday, the trial was resumed; that all the evidence on both sides was delivered to the Jury, and at a late hour of the night, the Counsel on the part of the State and this affiant, began their comments on the testimony, in addresses to the Jury; that while the Counsel for this affiant was engaged in such address the hour of twelve at night arrived; that the Judge who had been holding the Court, stated the term had expired, and retired from the bench without having made any order for the discharge of the Jury, or in relation to the said trial; that the Jurors so sworn and impannelled, then separated, and the Sheriff re-conducted this affiant to prison. This affiant further saith, that at the succeeding term of said Court, and of the Wednesday of said term, this affiant was again brought before said Court, when a motion was made by his Counsel for his discharge, which motion was overruled, and thereupon, &c.

"This affiant is advised that his life has been once in jeopardy, that no other Jury can pass upon the question of his guilt or innocence, but the Jury heretofore elected, sworn, charged, and never yet discharged; that his confinement in prison therefore, is illegal and oppressive. And this statement of facts is made on oath, in order to obtain a *Habeas Corpus* to enquire into the legality of his imprisonment."

Attached to the affidavit, was a copy of the record of Craven Superior Court, from which the following are extracts:

"*Saturday, October* 27, 1827.

"PRESENT, THE HONORABLE JOHN R. DONNELL.

"Jury called, &c. The prisoner's Counsel closed the defence at half past twelve o'clock, when the term having expired, his Honor retired from the bench, and the prisoner was remanded to Jail."

"*4th Monday after the 4th Monday of March, A. D.* 1828."

"PRESENT, THE HONORABLE ROBERT STRANGE.

"The prisoner being brought into Court, for the purpose of being tried on the charge which was submitted to a Jury, and on which their verdict was not returned, it was moved by his Counsel, that the prisoner be discharged. On argument, this motion was overruled."

After which, the cause was continued by the State.

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The *Habeas Corpus* was returnable on the 2d Monday of June last, before his honor the CHIEF-JUSTICE, who requested the assistance of their Honors, Judge HALL and Judge HENDERSON, and the question arising upon the affidavit and the record, was elaborately argued by *Gaston*, for the prisoner, and by *Taylor*, Attorney-General, for the State.

By the former were cited, 3 *Inst.* 110. 1 *do.* 227 *b.* *Case of the Kinlocks* (*Foster* 29, 31). *Hawkins, part* 2, *ch.* 47, § 1 *&* 2. 4 *vol.* 459. 2 *Hale's P. C.* 295, *note.* *Bill of Rights, sec.* 9. *State* v. *Garrigues*, (1 *Hay.* 241) 6 *Serg. & Rawle* 584, *and onwards.* And he commented upon *The People* v. *Goodwin* (18 *John.* 200) *Rex* v. *Edwards* (4 *Taun.* 309). *The People* v. *Olcott* (2 *John. Cases* 301) *&* *Rex* v. *Fowler* (4 *Bam. & Ald.* 273. 6 *Serg. & Low*, 423, *S. C.*)

The Attorney-General cited, *The People* v. *Goodwin*, *Rex* v. *Edwards*, *Rex* v. *Fowler*, *& The People* v. *Olcott*, *ubi supra.* *Foster* 31. 1 *Hale* 35. *Rex* v. *Stevenson*, (*Leach* 618) 2 *Hale* 228, 295, 297. *The U. States* v. *Coolridge* (2 *Gallison* 364) *The People* v. *Denton* (2 *John. Cases*, 275) *Commonwealth* v. *Bowden* (9 *Mass. R.* 494. 6 *Serg. & Rawle* 580). He contented, that in cases of physical necessity, arising from the act of God, all the books agree that a Jury may be discharged, in capital cases, and insisted that the result must be the same when the necessity was created by the act of law.

HALL, Judge.—In this case, the guilt or innocence of the prisoner is as little the subject of enquiry, as the merits of any case can be, when it is brought before this Court on a collateral question of law. Although the prisoner, if unfortunately guilty, may escape punishment, in consequence of the decision this day made in his favor, yet it should be remembered, that the same decision may be a bulwark of safety to those, who, more innocent, may

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become the subjects of persecution, and whose conviction, if not procured on one trial, might be secured on a second or third, whether they were guilty or not.

It is laid down by *Lord Coke*, that the life of a man shall not be twice put in jeopardy upon the same charge, for a capital offence. (3 *Inst.* 110. 1 *do.* 227. *Foster* 16, 22, 30). In this maxim is manifested the great concern which the law has, for the security of the lives of its citizens. It is intended as a barrier against oppression and persecution; and although it must have been known to the wisdom of the law, that it would be a mean by which the guilty may sometime escape from merited punishment, yet it was thought better to adopt it, than to leave it to the discretion of a Judge to award a second trial, when the Jury, in whose hands the life of the prisoner had been placed on the first trial, did not return a verdict.

From the record in this case, it appears, that a Jury was sworn and impannelled to try the prisoner, on the charge contained in the indictment, but they failed to return a verdict. This was a Jury of the prisoner's own choosing, and one too, to which the State did not object. When the Jury were thus charged with the prisoner, he certainly stood upon his trial—his life was jeopardized.

From this maxim there are some exceptions, but such exceptions as are under no *human control*—they are the offspring of necessity; as where a Juror is taken suddenly sick, where a woman is taken in labour, where the prisoner becomes insane, or where the Jury are discharged by consent of the prisoner, or at his request.

The record states, that the Jury were impannelled in the case, but it assigns no reason why a verdict was not returned by the Jury, and it would be worse than preposterous to say, that this Court can be governed by any thing else than the record. It is true, like other individuals, we are informed of the reason why the Jury did not return a verdict; that the term of the Court expired

before they had an opportunity of doing so. Let it be supposed that this fact was spread upon the record; it is certainly an event which might have been guarded against, though it was a case not without its difficulties. The trial might have been brought on sooner in the term. The Jury might have been directed to withdraw, and consider of the evidence after it was given in, and this the sooner, if the prisoner refused to consent to withdraw a Juror. I beg to be understood as laying down no rules for the government of the Courts; I am not competent to do so; if I was, it would not become me. But I am proving that the reason, why the Jury did not return their verdict, was an event which might have been guarded against; that it was not founded on uncontrollable necessity, and if it was not, it forms no exception to the maxim, that a citizen shall not be twice put in danger of his life upon the same charge, for a capital offence.

But this is not the first time this question has arisen in this State. It was decided in the case of the *State* v. *Garrigues*, (1 *Hay.* 241,) for murder, in the Superior Court of Halifax, in the year 1795. There the presiding Judge retired from the bench, but did not adjourn the Court, and the Jury having been impannelled in the case, separated without giving any verdict. It was held by *Williams* and *Haywood*, that the prisoner could not be put upon his trial a second time. The record there, and the record in this case are alike. In both cases, it appears that the Jury were impannelled, but returned no verdict. It is true we learn, like other individuals, that the reason why they returned no verdict in the one case was, that they could not agree; in the other, that the term expired before they considered of their verdict. But in both cases the record shows, and shows nothing else, that they were impannelled, and returned no verdict before the expiration of the term. It is certainly a difficult task to distinguish, on principle, the one case from

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the other. I may add that that opinion drew after it the approbation of the profession, and I believe I shall not treat with disrespect the memory of the dead, or the pretensions of the living, when I say that a greater criminal lawyer than *Judge Haywood*, never sat upon the bench in North-Carolina.

It is stated in *Hale*, that the practice was once otherwise; that where the prisoner was put upon his trial, the Court might discharge the Jury, if it appeared that the evidence was not sufficient to convict him, and remit him to jail for further evidence. It is stated however, in a note in the same book, that the practice is now otherwise; that a Jury once charged in a capital case cannot be discharged, until they have given their verdict, and Judge *Haywood* says, in the *State* v. *Garrigues*, that "this power was exercised for the benefit of the Crown only, but is a doctrine so abhorrent to every principle of safety and security, that it ought not to receive the least countenance in the Courts of this country." And *Haywood* is sustained in this opinion by *Foster*, who wrote long since Judge *Hale*. I say therefore, in the present case, it was not in the power of the Court to discharge the Jury, unless for the intervention of some cause, that could not be foreseen or controlled.

I admit, that if the Jury had been charged upon an indictment, which was in itself defective, so that judgment could not be given upon it, although the prisoner was found guilty, it would be no bar to a second trial; because although such feelings of danger might have been awakened as are incident to human nature, and which such occasions are naturally calculated to excite, yet in reality, the prisoner ran no risk; he was in no danger —he was tried as if upon no indictment. But in this case, there is no objection to the indictment. If the prisoner had been found guilty, he must have suffered the penalties of the law. He was placed upon his trial—his life was in the hands of the Jury. His breast was

occupied by a commixture of hope and fear; it throbbed alternately with both, and whether the struggle terminated in a verdict of guilt or innocence, it was certainly a guarantee against any future prosecution upon the same charge, and that guarantee need not claim to be bottomed upon any extraordinary maxim, marked with tenderness for the life of man. It is a plain principle of municipal jurisprudence, regulating ordinary cases of property between man and man. It does not constitute the maxim, that a man's life shall not be twice put in jeopardy for the same thing, to which *Lord Coke*, *Foster*, and others, fathers of the English criminal law, have given the sanction of their names.

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TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.--The prisoner has been brought up, on the return of a *Habeas Corpus*, and now moves for his discharge, or to be admitted to bail, on the ground that his life has been once put in jeopardy for the same offence, for which he now stands committed for trial.

The transcript of the record accompanying the return, discloses only the fact, that the prisoner was put upon his trial for the murder of *Williams*, and that no verdict was returned by the Jury. An affidavit was annexed, which though *ex parte*, states other facts, which have not been controverted at the bar, and which, therefore, it may be taken for granted, are correct. These are, that the trial began on Friday morning; that in the course of it, the witnesses on both sides were examined, the Counsel on the part of the State heard, and that while the Counsel for the prisoner was addressing the Jury, the hour of twelve of Saturday night arrived, of which the Judge gave notice to the parties, and then left the bench.

The case has been ably argued on both sides, and certainly a more important principle could not be brought into discussion, whether we view on one side, its connexion with the interests of public justice, or on the other, the important bearing it has on the personal secu-

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rity of the citizens, and their immunity from undue prosecution. As it is a case in which a Court has no discretion, but is bound to yield obedience to the law, without regard to consequences, it is of primary importance to ascertain, amidst the conflict of opinions, on which side the weight of principle and authority rests.

A writer of established reputation on the criminal law remarks, that it seems to have been anciently an uncontroverted rule, and hath been allowed, even by those of a contrary opinion, to have been the general tradition of the law, that a Jury sworn and charged in a capital case, cannot be discharged without the prisoner's consent, until they have given a verdict. It is added, that notwithstanding some authorities to the contrary, in the reign of *Charles* the 2d, this hath been holden for clear law, both in the reign of *James* the 2d, and since the revolution. (2 *Hawkins*, 619.) *Lord Coke*, who is cited as authority for the general position, lays it down in still broader terms, and so as to render the discharge of the Jury in treason, felony, or larceny, illegal, even with the consent of the prisoner. (3 *Inst.* 110.)

Much more modern authorities have introduced the exception, where the discharge takes place with the prisoner's consent and for his benefit; and this being reasonable and just, may be considered as now well settled.

In the remarkable case of the *Kenlocks*, reported by *Foster*, that eminent Judge endeavors to prove, that the case quoted by *Coke*, from the year book of *Edward* the 3d, does not show that the Jury was sworn, but only that they were in Court, and the party arraigned. But *Fitzherbert* in his abridgement, understands the case in the same way with *Coke*; for he alleges, that the reason of the judgment was, that the inquest having been once charged, could not be discharged. A majority of the Judges in that case admitted the authority of the rule, as a good general one, but not as practically applicable to those cases, where it would produce great hardships, or

manifest injustice to the prisoner. In the case quoted, the power of the Court to discharge the Jury, with the prisoner's consent, seems to have been for the first time well considered; and they rejected with just animadversion the authority of those cases, which had occurred in that period of misrule and persecution, preceding the revolution. In one of these, the Court discharged a Jury in a capital case, after evidence given on the part of the Crown, merely for want of sufficient evidence to convict, and in order to bring the prisoner to a second trial, when the Crown should be better prepared! In another, where the prisoner, unassisted by Counsel, consented to his own prejudice, that the Jury might be discharged.

These stains upon the administration of justice show to what extremes, in a state of civil discord, the passions of men urge them to trample upon the most salutary principles of law; and in what degree Judges, holding their office at the will of the sovereign, were eager to pander to his appetite for blood and forfeitures.

Certain exceptions have been incorporated with the rule, by such authority as we are not at liberty to reject, even if we were inclined to do so; but we cannot add to these exceptions without authority, unless the reason for them is equally forcible and conclusive. If the discharge take place with the prisoner's consent, and for his benefit, or where it is occasioned by an overruling necessity, beyond the reach of man's foresight and control, it cannot be the instrument of injustice or oppression to the prisoner. It is impossible to lay down a general rule, which may be applicable to all cases that may occur; but to the exception sanctioned in the case of the *Kenlocks*, may be fairly added that of *Elizabeth Meadows*, who was taken in labour during the trial. (*Foster* 76.) The case where the prisoner became insane, and where a Juryman fell down in a fit, (*Rex* v. *Edwards*, 4 *Taunton*, 309,) were decided on principles, from which I do not see that any mischief could arise. Whether that class

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of cases, where the Jury have been discharged, in consequence of undue practises having been used to keep back witnesses, or in consequence of a Juryman's having become intoxicated, stands upon the same authoritative ground, I am not prepared to decide. There is danger to be apprehended from every exception, arising from a fact which artifice and cunning may simulate. As at present advised, I think the exceptions in addition to those I have mentioned, ought to be confined to those cases of extreme and positive necessity, which are dispensed by the visitation of God, and which cannot, by any contrivance of man, be made the engines of obstructing that justice, which the safety of all requires should be done to the State, or weakening the efficacy of, and rendering illusive that maxim of civil liberty, of which the prisoner claims the protection.

There is no case in the British authorities, resembling the one under consideration, nor is it likely any such will ever occur. But some cases are furnished by American reporters, which it is proper to notice.

In Massachusetts, *Boden* was indicted for a highway robbery, and the Jury being impannelled, and having heard the evidence, and the whole of the case, retired; and after being confined the whole night and part of the day, returned into Court, and informed the Judge, that they had not agreed on a verdict, and that it was not probable they ever could agree. A Juror was withdrawn without the prisoner's consent, and he was afterwards tried and convicted by another Jury, and it was holden a good conviction. (9 *Mass. Rep.* 494.) It may be collected from this case, that the offence charged was not there a capital felony; the arguments of the Counsel for the State, and the opinion of the Court seem to show this. The maxim of the common law, therefore, under which the prisoner seeks shelter in this case, was not violated. Whether the cases of inevitable necessity, cited from the British books, apply to the case of discharging a Jury,

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because they say they have not agreed, and are not likely to agree, appears to me questionable. Juries very often agree, after thinking and saying they could not agree. If the Court possessed a discretionary power to discharge a Jury in a capital case, upon their saying they could not agree, it is to be apprehended, that very slight endeavors would be made among them, to reason with and enlighten each other; and that a disposition would prevail to escape from a duty, which every man considers painful. But the difficulties and disadvantages, under which the prisoner would enter upon his second trial, would probably expose him to increased danger.

It must be conceded, that the case of *Goodwin*, (18 *Johns.* 200) if rightly decided, is an authority against the prisoner in this case; for although the offence charged was not a capital felony, yet the reasoning extends the whole length of showing, that the Jury may be discharged in any case, and the prisoner tried again. The distinguished Judge who delivered the opinion of the Court in that case, thought the rule which declares that no person shall be subject for the same offence, to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb, means that no person shall be twice tried for the same offence. But I cannot acquiesce in this opinion, for it would seem strange that a familiar maxim of the common law, admitted for ages, without denial or controversy, should require a solemn constitutional sanction for the more effectual protection of the citizens. The pleas of "heretofore convicted" and "heretofore acquitted" are interwoven with our criminal law, as essentially as the pleas of former judgment between the same parties, or the pendency of another suit for the same cause, are with our civil law. Could the amendment to the Constitution of the United States mean no more than this, when it provided that "no person shall be subject, for the same offence, to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb?" Did the Constitutions of several of the States mean no more, when they

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adopted the same article? As the common law of every state already protects the accused against a second trial, not only in crimes of all descriptions, but in questions of civil right, it is to be inferred that the Constitutions meant much more, and that their design was to protect the accused against a trial, where the first Jury had been discharged without due cause.

"Twice put in jeopardy", and "twice put on trial," convey to the mind several and distinct meanings, for we can readily understand how a person has been in jeopardy, upon whose case the Jury have not passed. The danger and peril of a verdict do not relate to a verdict given. When the Jury are impannelled upon the trial of a person, charged with a capital offence, and the indictment is not defective, his life is in peril or jeopardy, and continues so throughout the trial. And this is the legal understanding of the term, as explained by Mr. Justice *Foster*, in the case of the *Kenlocks*. "The discharge of the Jury was not to bring the prisoners' lives twice in jeopardy, (*which is one great inconvenience of discharging Jurors in capital cases,*) but merely in order to give them one chance for their lives, which it was apprehended they had lost by pleading to issue." This is a full admission that one inconvenience of discharging the Jury is to put the prisoner twice in jeopardy; which he could not be if a trial were meant. The same meaning is ascribed to the expression by *Chitty*, in his Crim. Law. (1 *vol.* 63.)

Besides those cases, in which Juries may be discharged from the casual circumstance of illness, there are some others in which the Crown, at least by the consent of the prisoner, is at liberty to withdraw a Juror, in order to indict him again, or put off his trial. Thus it is laid down, that to let him into a ground of defence, which he could not otherwise have taken, before evidence given, the Court may by consent discharge the Jury; but it does not seem the prosecutor *has the right to bring the prisoner twice into peril of his life.* In the same light,

has the subject been viewed in the Supreme Court of Pennsylvania, in 6 *Sergeant* and *Rawle*, 6; and finally, I thought the law in this State to have been settled for thirty years, ever since the case of the *State* v. *Garrigues*, (1 *Hayw.* 241,) conformably to which decision, other cases have occurred of a similar kind, though not reported.

Under this impression of the subject, I do not feel the authority of the law, to add this additional exception to the rule, since the trial of a prisoner, its conduct and duration, are under the direction and control of the Court and Counsel, who may in general foresee, or make a reasonable conjecture as to the time it may occupy. It would be a rule, subject in its very nature to operate oppressively to the prisoner, without any exterior agency, or the influence of sinister design. But it would be still more capable, if such were present, of being made an engine of persecution. Not that there is reason to apprehend any such influence, in the present tranquil state of the country, and under the existing purity of the administration of justice. But a rule established in such times should be calculated to protect men when strife prevails, and the angry passions are let loose; for it cannot be foreseen what may ensue in future; and the law, as now established, must be the rule for posterity, unless the legislature should think proper to interfere. Should the rule, according to this opinion, facilitate the escape of some guilty persons, the addition of their exceptions might, in other times, lead to the punishment of innocent persons; and we are admonished by the law, that it is better that ten guilty persons escape, than that one innocent suffer. My opinion consequently is, that the prisoner cannot be tried again on this charge.

BY THE JUDGES.—It seemeth to us that the said *Robert Spier* is detained in prison to be tried on an indictment, &c.; that on the said indictment the said *Robert* hath already been tried; that the said *Robert* cannot be

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lawfully tried again upon the same indictment, nor for the same offence. Therefore it is ordered by us that upon the said *Robert* entering into recognizance, &c. to appear, &c. the said *Robert* shall be wholly released and discharged.

J. L. TAYLOR.
JOHN HALL.
L. HENDERSON.

The State
v.
Hugh Simpson & John Fisher. } From Bladen.

If three persons commit a trespass upon property, in the presence of the person in possession, their number makes it indictable, although actual force is not used.

The Defendants were indicted for that they "with force and arms, and *with strong hand*, in &c. into a certain corn field, there &c. in the peaceable possession of one *Sarah McDaniel*, did enter, and one bushel of corn, then and there with force and arms, and *with strong hand* from the possession of the said *S. M.* did take and carry away."

On the trial the case was, that the prosecutrix *Sarah McDaniel*, and her sister were gathering the corn, when the Defendants with two other persons, entered the field with a cart, and demanded of the prosecutrix a portion of the crop, which was refused by her, whereupon, they began to gather the standing corn, and take that which had been gathered by the prosecutrix, and although forbidden by her, carried it all away.

His honor Judge NORWOOD informed the Jury, that if three or more persons go together to commit a trespass, and do commit it, the number constitutes the force, and renders the trespass indictable; and that if the person in legal possession is present, and forbids the trespassers

from proceeding, which is disregarded and the trespass committed, this renders it indictable.

The Defendants were convicted, and appealed.

No Counsel appeared for Defendants.

Devereux, in place of the Attorney-General, cited 1 *Hawkins. ch* 28, § 27 *&* 28. *Russel on Crimes* 70. 114. *Rex* v. *Wilson* (8 *T. R.* 357) *Rex* v. *Storr* (3 *Burr.* 1698) *Anonymous* (3 *Salk.* 187).

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The indictment charges the offence sufficiently, if the facts will warrant the inference of law, that the act amounted to a trespass; for the words "with strong hand," import something criminal in its nature, something more than is meant by the words *vi et armis*, which are the mere formal words in an action of trespass. The others constitute a sufficient allegation of an actual force used, amounting to a breach of the peace, more especially when it is charged to have been committed by two persons. The enquiry therefore is, whether the facts proved, according to the case sent up, amount to an indictable trespass. In *Regina* v. *Soley & others*, it is said by *Lord Holt*, that "as to what act will make a riot or trespass, such act as will make a trespass, will make a riot;" by which he must be understood to mean, if committed by three or more persons. (11 *Mod.* 116). The converse of the proposition must be true, that a trespass committed by three or more persons will make a riot. In every trespass, as well as riot, there must be some circumstances, either of an actual force or violence, or at least of an apparent tendency thereto, as are apt to strike a terror into the people; but it is not necessary that personal violence should have been committed. (*Clifford* v. *Brandon*, 2 *Campbell* 369). Any resistance on the part of the prosecutrix must have led to an actual breach of the peace; but the resistance of two women to the four persons who came to take the

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corn, must have been unavailing. They came there to take it, and would have used the necessary force, if their numbers had not terrified the owner into submission. It is no answer to the indictment therefore, that they quietly gathered the corn, and put it into the cart; for acts of extreme violence, as robbery, are sometimes committed under a very civil appearance. I think this was more than a civil injury; and for the reason given by the Judge who tried the cause, I am of opinion that the judgment should be affirmed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

The State v. Nicholas Hood. } From Guilford.

The act of 1787, authorising persons convicted on indictment or presentment, and unable or unwilling to pay the costs, to be hired out by the Sheriff, is repealed by the act of 1797, (*Rev. ch.* 484).

The Defendant, a free negro, was convicted of an assault and battery, before his honor Judge DANIEL, on the last Circuit. Being unable to pay the costs of the prosecution, the Defendant prayed that he might be discharged, upon taking the oath prescribed for insolvent debtors.

The Solicitor General moved his Honor to direct the Sheriff to hire out the Defendant to any person, who would take him for the shortest term, and pay the costs of the prosecution. An order to that purpose being made, the Defendant appealed, Mr. Solicitor-General *Scott* waiving the surety required for the costs of this Court.

No Counsel appeared for the Defendant, and *Devereux*, in the place of the Attorney-General, declined arguing the case for the State.

TAYLOR, Chief Justice.—The decision of this case depends on the question, whether the act of 1787 is now

in force. The act is entitled "for hiring out persons convicted on indictment or presentment, not being able or willing to pay the fees of office, and Jailor's fees."— The mischief the act professes to remedy, is that arising from persons, who are convicted on indictment, taking the benefit of the insolvent act, either neglecting or refusing to pay fees of office, and Sheriff's, and Jailor's fees. It enacts, that all persons convicted on presentment or indictment, who shall be unwilling or unable to pay the office or Jailor's fees, that may be consequent thereon, shall be hired out by the Sheriff of the county, where such person is or may be convicted, for such time as any person will take him or them to serve for the said fees or charges. After this no person could be discharged under the insolvent law, where he stood committed for office fees; and so it remained until 1797, when an act was passed for the purpose of prescribing a mode of authenticating claims against the State, and their mode of payment, so far as respects Jailors, Sheriffs, Coroners, Clerks of the Superior Courts, and witnesses for and in behalf of the State. After establishing detailed regulations, relative to authenticating the claims of all these officers, the fourth clause is thus expressed: that no claim authorized by this act, shall be allowed, until a *fieri facias* shall have first issued to the county or counties, in which the criminal may be supposed to have owned property, and the Sheriff's return that no property is to be found; and if the criminal is at large, *without taking the oath of insolvency*, it should be the duty of the Clerk to issue his writ of *capias ad satisfaciendum*, and the duty of the Sheriff to arrest the body of the said criminal, if to be found, and him confine until he either pays off the costs of prosecution, *or discharges himself by taking the oath of insolvency*. This clause contains an unequivocal recognition of the legality of discharging a prisoner, on his taking the oath of insolvency; and the unusual phraseology of the repealing clause seems to point at the act

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of 1817. The common language of a repealing clause is, "that all acts and parts of acts, that come within the purview and meaning of this act, shall be and they are hereby repealed and made void;" whereas the expressions of the repealing clause annexed to this are, "all acts, *usages and customs*, coming within the purview and meaning of this act, are hereby repealed, and made *utterly null and void.*" (*Martin's Revisal*). But independently of this, an act which entitles a prisoner to his discharge, upon taking the insolvent oath, is inconsistent with an act, which requires him to be hired out, and consequently operates as a repeal of it; for where two acts are affirmative, though there be no negative words, yet the latter, being contrary to the former, amounts to a repeal of the former. I am consequently of opinion, that the Defendant is entitled to take the oath of insolvency for the office fees, (the regulations of the act of 1797 being observed,) and that the judgment be reversed.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

The State
v.
Jim, a negro slave. } From Brunswick.

The testimony of a witness who is corruptly false in any particular, should be entirely disregarded by the Jury; and where they were instructed that they might, exercising a sound discretion, reject part of the testimony which they did not believe, and act on part which they did believe, it was held to be erroneous.

The prisoner was indicted under the act of 1823 (*Taylor's Revisal, ch.* 1229) for an assault with an intent to commit a rape upon a white female.

On the trial, the only witness who directly proved the assault, was one *Mary Rittenhouse*, whose general moral character was seriously impeached: but there was no evidence of her character *for truth* when upon oath.

Mr. Holmes, a gentleman of the bar, was called to impeach her, which was effected by his proving a material variance between her evidence on the trial of this indictment, and that given upon a former trial of the prisoner for the same offence. (*Ante* 142.)

His honor Judge NORWOOD instructed the Jury, that a general character such as had been given of the witness *Rittenhouse*. "was a circumstance against her credibility, and should be taken into consideration by them, and might, if accompanied by other circumstances against her credit be thought by them sufficient to induce them to disregard her testimony. But that such general character was not entitled to as much weight, as a general character, bad in respect to truth when speaking on oath; and in either case, as their duty was to ascertain the truth, they might, exercising a sound discretion, reject part of a witness's testimony which they did not believe, and act on such part as they did believe."

The prisoner being convicted, motions were made, on several grounds, for a new trial, and in arrest of judgment; which being overruled, and judgment of death awarded, the prisoner appealed.

No Counsel for the prisoner appeared in this Court; but *Badger*, as *amicus curiæ*, suggested, that the Judge had erred in charging the Jury, that they might reject part of a witness's testimony, which they did not believe, and act on that part which they did believe. He observed, that the proper instruction was, that if the Jury thought the witness had corruptly sworn false in any particular, they ought to disregard her testimony *in toto*. He stated the reason of the rule to be, that the Jury had *quoad* the particular case, *judicially* ascertained the corruption of the witness, and therefore, as to *that* case, the result was the same as in all cases, where the corruption was judicially ascertained by a conviction for perjury.

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Devereux, in place of the Attorney-General, admitted the rule to be, as stated by *Badger*.

HENDERSON, Judge.—I understand the Judge as distinctly informing the Jury, when discussing the want of credit in a witness, arising from corruption or immorality, that although they should discredit a witness in part, because that in such part they thought the witness was both false and corrupt, yet they were at liberty, if they thought proper, to believe him in other parts of his testimony. I have always understood the law to be otherwise; for although it is true that if the Jury should ascertain, that a witness is incorrect in his testimony as to one or more facts, yet if he is not corruptly so, but is merely mistaken in judgment, or by reason of a failure in memory, the witness is not discredited further than would arise from a want of reliance on the correctness of his conception, or from a distrust in his powers of memory; and if the Jury think proper they may believe him as to other parts of his testimony. But when once they are *satisfied of the witness's corruption*, they are bound, in obedience to the law, to disregard all that he swore to. For the law does not act upon a Jury's bare belief, their bare opinion of the fact; their belief must be founded on that which is regarded in law, as testimony. Hence the Jury are not permitted to hear a witness who is not sworn, although they might possibly believe him. So also they might believe persons convicted of an infamous crime, perjury for instance; but such persons are not allowed to be heard before a Jury. I can see no difference in principle, and if so, there should be none in practice, between a person heretofore convicted, and one who stands convicted before the Jury, in the case they are trying. Hence the maxim, *falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus*. Were it otherwise, the law would be untrue to itself. It is not every *conjecture* which floats in a Juror's mind, that should guide him in

the formation of his verdict. His will is not the law. He is bound to pronounce his solemn convictions after weighing the evidence, and if he cannot arrive at this state of mind, he should find against that party who holds the affirmative, that is, against him whose duty it is to produce satisfactory evidence to the Jury. Nothing is more difficult than to prescribe rules of faith; perhaps every man has one peculiar to himself. But in some cases the law has prescribed the rule, and I think that this is one of them; and it is the duty of the Jury to yield to the law, and not to set themselves above it. Whether any of the witnesses were placed in the situation above mentioned before the Jury, I have not the right to say; it belonged exclusively to them. But they should be satisfied that such was the fact, before they acted under it. There should be such evidence of falsehood and corruption, that they as Jurors, would convict the witness, were he on trial before them; if they doubt upon the subject, the law does not forbid them to believe the witness. As the Jury may have been misled by the charge, I think that there should be a new trial.

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Taylor, Chief-Justice.—There are many exceptions taken in this case, which I think it is unnecessary to notice; for I suppose they would not be seriously insisted on. The prisoner being without Counsel, I have felt it to be a duty to examine the record attentively, to ascertain whether there are any points, which ought to have been ruled differently.

The only direct evidence of the assault was that of *Mary Rittenhouse*, whose credibility was assailed, on the ground of her immoral character; and *Mr. Holmes* has pointed out some important variations in her testimony, since the time she gave evidence on the first trial. All the rest of the evidence on the part of the State, is supplemental, and intended to be confirmatory of her's. Whether she was entitled to belief, was a question alto-

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gether for the determination of the Jury, and whether they have decided right or wrong, this Court cannot interfere with their verdict. But the prisoner was entitled to the full benefit of that advice from the Court to the Jury, which should enable them to weigh the evidence according to the principles which the law has established. Now the Court instructed the Jury, that "a general character, such as that of *Mary Rittenhouse*, was a circumstance against her credibility, and should be taken into consideration by the Jury, and might, if accompanied with other circumstances against the credit of the witness, be thought by the Jury to be sufficient to induce them to disregard her testimony. But that such general character was not entitled to as much weight, as a general character had in respect of truth, when speaking on oath."—The correctness of this direction, it is not my purpose to enquire into; it is cited to show, that the Jury were thereby prepared to have their confidence in the credibility of the witness weakened on the score of her corruption, or immorality of character. The Court then proceeds to state, "that in either case, as their duty was to ascertain the truth, they might, exercising a sound discretion, reject part of a witness's testimony, which they did not believe, and act on such part as they did believe." And it is in this respect, I think the prisoner has not received the full benefit of such legal advice as the Judge ought to have given to the Jury.

I believe that all the writers on the law of evidence, lay down the rule, that a witness who gives false testimony, as to one particular, cannot be credited as to any, the maxim being "*falsum in uno, falsum in omnibus.*" And it is very reasonable that it should be so; for the general presumption that a witness will tell the truth, is overthrown, when it is shewn that he is capable of perjury. Our faith (says an accurate writer on evidence) cannot be partial, or fractional; where any material fact rests on the testimony of a witness, the degree of

credit due to him must be ascertained, and according to the result, his testimony is to be credited or rejected. A witness, whose misrepresentation results from mistake or infirmity, and not from design, is of course not within the operation of the principle; his integrity remains unimpeached, though his character for ability may be impaired. On this ground, therefore, and especially in a case affecting the life of the prisoner, I feel bound to give my opinion in favor of a new trial. As I give no opinion upon the other objections, it will of course be considered, that I do not regard any of them as tenable.

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The State v. Upton.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed, and rule for a new trial made absolute.

The State
v.
Jesse Upton. } From Guilford.

Upon a conviction of murder, the proper and formal entry of the verdict is "guilty *of the felony and murder* in the manner and form as he stands charged, &c." but where the Jury thus responded, and the entry was "guilty in manner and form as charged," the finding was held sufficient, and the prisoner not entitled to his clergy.

The Deputy Clerk of the Court from whence a cause is removed, may amend the transcript, by the original record produced in Court.

After the new trial granted in this case, (*ante* 268,) the cause was removed to Guilford, where it was again tried on the last Circuit before his honor Judge DANIEL. The only point made in the Court below, arose from the entry of the verdict, which was in the following words:

"Look on the prisoner ye that be sworn, what say ye? "is he guilty or not guilty of the felony and murder "whereof he stands indicted? When *G. W.* one of the Ju- "rors aforesaid, delivered the verdict Guilty; when the "verdict was recorded in the following words, find the "Defendant *Jesse Upton*, guilty in manner and form as "charged in the bill of indictment."

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In the Court below, the Counsel for the prisoner moved in arrest of judgment, contending that the verdict was defective. This motion was overruled by the presiding Judge; the prisoner then prayed the benefit of clergy, and his Counsel insisted that the verdict was only equivalent to a conviction of manslaughter. The prayer for clergy was disallowed, and judgment of death awarded, whereupon the prisoner appealed.

In this Court, several other reasons were assigned in arrest of judgment, but the Chief-Justice, in his opinion, has given so full a statement of them, and of those parts of the record upon which they were founded, that any addition to it would be superfluous.

W. H. Haywood, for the Prisoner.

Devereux, in the place of the Attorney-General, for the State.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The transcripts of the record in this case, coming from three several Superior Courts, are multifarious, and can only be understood by an attentive examination. It will therefore, materially facilitate the decision of the case, and enable us duly to estimate the objections made by the Prisoner's Counsel, to exhibit a concise history of the cause from its commencement, as extracted from the several records sent up.

At September, 1825, the bill of indictment purports to have been found a true bill, by a Grand Jury of Randolph County, in which the offence is laid to have been committed. This copy of the bill is free from the objection made to it, with respect to the christian name of the deceased, for it is spelt *Anne* throughout: It is also free from the objection, that it does not appear, except inferentially, upon what part of the person of the deceased the strokes were given; for it is directly charged, that the mortal wounds were given upon the sides of the head of the deceased. But the defect of the transcript consists, in not setting forth the name of the Judge, or of

the Grand Jurors—I should rather say, it omits to state them; for whether it is erroneous on that account, I do not give any opinion, and the sequel will show it to be unnecessary.

The cause was continued until the Fall term of 1826, when the prisoner was arraigned, and pleaded not guilty, and upon his affidavit, the case was removed to Davidson Superior Court. Nor does the transcript of the term when the removal was ordered, state the presence of any Judge.

The cause being thus in Davidson, the prisoner was tried and convicted, at the Fall term of that Court, in 1826, upon which he moved for a new trial, and in arrest of judgment; which motions were not disposed of at that term. But the prosecuting officer, having suggested a diminution of the record, a *Certiorari* was directed to Randolph, to send up a complete one.

At the following term of Davidson Superior Court, a transcript was sent up from Randolph, which stated the name of the Judge and of the Grand Jurors. In one repetition of the name of the deceased, in the copy of the indictment, it is spelt *Anny*. By this transcript it also appears, that the prisoner was arraigned, and pleaded as it is first above set forth. But it appearing to that Court still defective, a *subpœna duces tecum* was ordered to the Clerk of Randolph, to produce the original record, which was done at the same term, and the Deputy Clerk of Randolph permitted to amend the transcripts before sent, by the originals then produced. In the indictment copied into this transcript, there is one misspelling of the name *Anny*. The reasons in arrest of judgment were then overruled, and the prisoner appealed to this Court, where a new trial was awarded. At the October term, 1827, of Davidson, the cause was continued on the prisoner's affidavit.

At the Spring term of 1828, it was removed to Guilford Superior Court, on the prisoner's affidavit, where,

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during the same Circuit, it was tried, and the prisoner convicted; who then moved in arrest of judgment, which being overruled, he appealed to this Court.

Several objections have been here taken in arrest of judgment; and it is fit, in a case of so much importance, that they should be duly considered.

The first relates to the manner of recording the verdict. It appears from the record, that the foreman was called upon to say, whether the prisoner was guilty, or not guilty, of the felony and murder whereof he stood indicted, and he answered guilty. This is the established form, and is responsive to the question asked. The entry of the verdict is a formal act of the Clerk, and it is here, substantially and in effect, that the Jury find the prisoner guilty of the felony and murder, whereof he stands indicted; for with that he is charged in the indictment. They must necessarily find him guilty of the felony and murder, as charged in the indictment, when they find him guilty in manner and form, as charged in the bill. The three first exceptions relating to this point are clearly untenable.

The fourth exception denies the jurisdiction of Guilford Superior Court. But the transcript from Davidson County shows that an affidavit for removal was filed by the prisoner, that there was a Judge present, and that he made an order for the removal. It is difficult to conceive in what manner the Court of Guilford could be more completely possessed of jurisdiction, according to the act of Assembly.

The arraignment is distinctly stated in the transcript both before and after the amendment, and each time it is stated to have taken place at September, 1826.

Other objections are—the omission of the conjunction *that*, and the Court's having permitted the deputy Clerk to produce the original record, and amend the transcript by it. As to the first, the omission of the word in no respect alters the sense. It is designed as a note of con-

nexion; but whether we say, *that Jesse Upton* is presented, or *Jesse Upton* is presented, the same idea is conveyed to the mind.

The Deputy Clerk is an officer recognized by the law, acting under oath, and competent to do any act, which his principal, were he present, might do; and it was certainly proper in the Court, when they saw that the transcript was imperfect, in omitting the name of the Judge, and the names of the Grand Jurors, to have it amended by the original; for the indictment could not have been found and returned, unless there had been a Judge and a Grand Jury. It would be a serious obstruction to the administration of justice, if transcripts sent from one Court to another sometimes loosely made up, could not be amended by the original record. It is every day's practice to do so, and it is consonant with principle.

The misspelling of the name is immaterial, since it appears throughout the indictment to be the same person; the *Anny* murdered, is "*the said Anne*" upon whom the felonious assault was made, and who was hit and struck. The name with the final *e*, is as often called *Anny*, as *Ann*; and misspelling in a name, where the sound is not altered, is unimportant. Upon the whole, the conviction appears to be right, and the Superior Court must award the sentence of the law.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

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The State
v.
Major Barden. } From Wayne.

It seems that a witness may speak of information derived from a negro, upon which acts are predicated, in explanation of those acts. One who is privy to a petty Larceny before the fact, is a principal.

The Defendant was indicted for Petty Larceny, in stealing a bag of cotton.

On the trial a witness stated, without any objection on the part of the Defendant, that he was informed by a negro, that the cotton was in a house, on the premises of the Defendant—that he searched that house, and found the information of the negro to be correct.

His honor Judge STRANGE informed the Jury, that if they believed from the testimony, that the stealing was the joint act of the Defendant and of the negro, who had given the information, their verdict ought to be for the State—that if they believed it to be the act of the negro alone, but committed under any previous concert with the Defendant, they ought also to find the Defendant guilty. But if they believed that the negro had taken the cotton without any previous concert with the Defendant, they ought to return a verdict for the Defendant.

The Defendant was convicted, and moved for a new trial, 1st, because the witness had given in evidence the information of the negro, and 2d, because of error in the charge of the Judge.

No Counsel appeared for the Appellant, and the case was submitted without argument, by *Devereux*, in the place of the Attorney-General.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The conversation with the negro, or rather the fact that the negro directed the witness to a particular place, to search for the cotton, is a circumstance of which the witness might speak, especially as it was not objected to. I wish to express no opi-

nion as to what would be the case if the evidence had been objected to. I rather think that the insulated fact is proper, if for no other purpose, to explain the motive of the witness. I cannot see how it could effect the Defendant, otherwise than to support the credit of the witness, by showing that he had a motive for his conduct. In that view it went to show, not that the cotton was in the house, but that the witness had been told it was there. As to the other parts of the case, there is no doubt but the opinion of the Court was correct. All who are concerned in a petty larceny, are principals. Whoever procures a felony to be done, although it be by the instigation of a third person, is an accessary before the fact; and that which in felony makes a person an accessary before the fact, in petty larceny and misdemeanors makes him a principal.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment affirmed.

The State v. Keziah Mumford, } From Anson.

In an indictment for perjury, it is sufficient to charge generally, that the false oath was material to the trial of the issue upon which it was taken; it is not necessary to show particularly, the manner in which it was material.

A general averment falsifying the testimony, is not sufficient, every fact falsely deposed to must be distinctly negatived.

The Defendant was tried on the last Circuit before his honor Judge NORWOOD, upon the following indictment:

"The Jurors &c. that heretofore &c. in &c. *K. M.* late &c. came before *Hugh McKenzie, Esq.* then and yet being one of the Justices, &c. and then and there upon her oath, charged one *Alfred Noble* before the said *H. M.* the Justice &c. with having assaulted, stricken, and bruised one *Henry Mumford*. And the Jurors aforesaid, &c. do further present, that upon the examination of the said *K. M.* before, &c. upon her oath aforesaid, touching and concerning the alleged as-

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sault by the said *A. N.* in and upon the said *Henry Mumford*, certain questions then and there became and were material, that is to say, whether *A. N.* did strike her husband *Henry Mumford*, with a stick across the back at the last time he and *V. P.* wrestled, and whether the blow, across the back with a stick, was given immediately as they fell. And the Jurors &c. do further present, that the said *K. M.* wickedly, devising and intending unjustly to aggrieve the said *A. N.* and procure him to be imprisoned, and kept in prison for a long space of time, on &c. at &c. before the said *H. M.* then being, &c. she the said *K. M.* did then and there take her corporal oath, and was sworn upon the Holy Gospel of God, before the said *H. M.* Justice, &c. he the said *H. M.* then and there having sufficient and competent power and authority, to administer an oath to the said *K. M.* in that behalf, and that the said *K. M* not having &c but being moved, &c. then and there before the said *H. M.* Justice, &c. upon her oath &c. falsely, &c. did depose, say, swear, give and make information, among other things, in substance and to the effect following: that is to say, that *N.* (meaning the said *A. N.*) did strike her husband *Henry Mumford* with a stick across the back, at the last time he (meaning the said *Henry Mumford*,) and *V. P.* (meaning a certain *V. P.*) wrestled, and that the blow (meaning the blow with the stick across the back of the said *Henry Mumford*) was given immediately as they (meaning the said *Henry Mumford* and the said *V. P.*) fell, whereas in truth and in fact, the said *A. N.* did not strike her husband *Henry Mumford* with a stick across the back, at the last time he, the said *Henry Mumford* and *V. P.* wrestled, and whereas in truth and in fact the blow was not given as they (the said *Henry Mumford* and the said *V. P.*) fell. And so the Jurors aforesaid, &c. &c."

After a verdict for the State, the Counsel for the prisoner moved in arrest of judgment, contending that the assignment of perjury was not sufficiently certain, and in effect was nothing more than a negative pregnant; his Honor the presiding Judge, being of that opinion, arrested the judgment, whereupon *Mr. Solicitor Troy*, appealed.

No Counsel appeared for the Appellant.

Devereux, for the State, cited *Rex* v. *Aylett*, (1 *T. R.* 63) *Rex* v. *Atkinson*, (*Bacon Ab. Perjury* 6) *Rex* v. *Perrot*, (2 *M. & S.* 385) *Rex* v. *Dowlin*, (5 *T. R.* 311, 318) *Rex* v. *Griepe*. (*Ld. Ray.* 261) *Starkie's Criminal Pleading*, 134—2 *Chitty's Criminal Law*, 309, 352, 353.

TAYLOR, Chief-Justice.—The objection taken in arrest of judgment, is founded on the assumption, that the only material enquiry before the Justice was, whether *Noble* had assaulted *Mumford*, or not, on the day specified, and that whether he struck him on the back, or not, at the last wrestle, was irrelevant, and unconnected with that question; that the assignment of perjury in the circumstances, is consistent with the belief that the Defendant might have sworn truly as to the principal fact, viz. the assault. This presents two questions—whether the materiality of the enquiry is sufficiently stated in the indictment, and whether the assignment of perjury is properly and distinctly made?

It is laid down as a rule, which I find no where controverted, that it should appear on the face of the indictment, that the oath taken was material to the question depending, not by setting forth the circumstances which render it so, in describing the proceedings of a former trial, but by a general allegation that the particular question became material. In *Aylett's case*, a leading one on this subject, it is stated, that it became a material question on the hearing of the complaint, and the hearing of that is stated in general terms. (1 *Term Rep.* 66.) In the *King* v. *Dowlin*, the question was much debated. It is there stated, that the question became material on the trial, in the same general terms that it is stated here; and the trial is referred to in this manner, that "at such a Court J. R. was in due form of law tried upon a certain indictment, then and there depending against him for murder." *Dowlin* was a witness against J. R. on that trial, and the perjury was assigned, in his swearing, that "he had never said he would be revenged of the said J. R. and would work his ruin." On this part of the case, it was argued on behalf of *Dowlin*, that all those facts ought to be stated in the proceedings against J. R. which were necessary to show that the jurisdiction was competent; that there was something to

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be tried; the materiality of the question to that point, and the falsity of the oath. This objection is thus directly met by *Lord Kenyon:* "But it has been objected, that it was necessary to set forth in the indictment, so much of the proceedings of the former trial, as will show the materiality of the question on which the perjury is assigned. If it were necessary, and if the question arose on the credit due to the witness, the whole of the evidence given before must be set forth; but that has never been held to be necessary, it always having been adjudged to be sufficient to allege generally, that the particular question became a material question. But here it is averred, that the question on which the perjury was assigned, was a material question, and the Jury have found it so by their verdict." (5 *Term Rep.* 319.)

In this indictment, the warrant and examination before the Magistrate are stated, and the general allegation of the materiality of the question, is in conformity with the best forms, and considered in reference to the act on this subject, (*Rev. ch.* 383) appears to me unexceptionable.

The matter sworn to by the Defendant, is contradicted in the assignment of perjury, specially and particularly, and in the words in which it was sworn. A general averment upon the whole matter, that the Defendant falsely swore, is not sufficient: it should be specific and distinct, to the end that the Defendant may have notice of what he is to come prepared to defend. (2 *M. & S.* 385.) And the whole matter of the Defendant's false testimony must be set forth; and if the least part of one entire assignment be unproved, she could not be convicted. The offence charged, consists in the whole, and not in any one part of the assignment. And this, in my opinion, obviates the necessity of any opinion, as to how far perjury may be committed, if the false oath has a tendency to prove or disprove the matter in issue, although but circumstantially; or how far the fact sworn to, though not material to the issue, must have such a

connexion with the principal fact, as to give weight to the testimony on that point. These views of the subject, could, in this case, only be properly presented to the Court trying the cause. I think the conviction is right.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

The State
v.
John M. Greenlee. } From Burke.

At common law to constitute forgery, the intent to defraud must either be apparent from the false making, or become so by extrinsic facts. Therefore an indictment which charged the false making to have been in the alteration of an order, given by the Defendant, without charging that the alteration was made after it was circulated and had been taken up by him, was held to be fatally defective.

The Defendant was tried upon the Fall Circuit of 1827, before his honor Judge NORWOOD, on an indictment consisting of two counts, the second of which only is material, and is as follows:

"And the Jurors aforesaid, upon their oath aforesaid, do further present, that the said *John M. Greenlee*, of &c. on &c. with force and arms, in &c. being indebted to one *William Ainsworth*, in the sum of thirty dollars, and having funds in the hands of one *James Avery*, of &c. did then and there write an order to the said *J. A.* requesting him, the said *J. A.* to pay to him, the said *W. A.* the said sum of thirty dollars; the particular date of which said order is to the Jurors now here sworn unknown, which said order, as near as the Jurors now here sworn can describe, was as follows, that is to say:

Mr. *J. A.*

Please to pay *W. A.* thirty dollars, and this shall be your order for the same, JOHN M. GREENLEE.

With a memorandum thereunder written, and signed by the said *John M. Greenlee*, in his own proper name, which said underwriting is as follows, as near as the Jurors now here sworn can describe, that is to say:

N. B. Mr. *A.* has receipted *James Greenlee* for the same.

JOHN M. GREENLEE.

And the Jurors aforesaid, upon their oath aforesaid, do further present, that the said *John M. Greenlee*, afterwards &c. with force and arms in &c. the said order and memorandum aforesaid feloniously did

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alter, and cause to be altered by then and there feloniously and falsely making, forging and adding the word *to* between the words *has* and *receipted*, and that he the said *John M Greenlee*, did then and there obliterate the letters *e* and *d*, the two last letters in the word *receipted* before written, in the said written memorandum afores id, whereby the said order. and writing under the same, became altered, and the word *receipted* before written in the same, by destroying the said two last letters *e* and *d* so falsely destroyed & forged as aforesaid, became *receipt*, and also by then and there falsely & feloniously making, forging and adding the word *to* between the word *has* and the word *receipted*, before also written in the said order and memorandum, by reason of which said forging and adding so falsely made, forged and added as aforesaid, the said underwritten memorandum became in fact, and did signify that the said *W. A.* had thereafter to give the said *James Greenlee* an acquittance and receipt for the same thirty dollars aforesaid, which said order and memorandum thereunder written, so feloniously and falsely altered and caused to be altered, is as follows, as near as the Jurors now here sworn can describe, that is to say:

Mr. *J. A.*

Please to pay *W. A.* thirty dollars.

JOHN M. GREENLEE.

N. B. Mr. *A. has to* receipt *James Greenlee* for the same.

JOHN M. GREENLEE.

With intention to defraud the said *W A.* of the sum of thirty dollars, contrary to the statute in that case made and provided, and against the peace and dignity of the State.

The Defendant was found "not guilty of the forgery "whereof he stands charged, but guilty of the forgery "in manner and form as charged against him, at com-"mon law."

Judgment for the State was rendered upon the verdict, and the Defendant appealed.

Badger, for the Appellant, moved in arrest of judgment, and contended that the indictment did not set forth any offence either at common law, or under any statute, it being no offence to alter a person's own note after it was taken up, provided it was not again put in circulation, and that the indictment contained no averment, of any attempt to circulate the order, after it was taken up by the Defendant.

Devereux, for the State, declined arguing the case.

HENDERSON, Judge.—The false making of certain writings mentioned in the statute, with an *intent* to defraud, constitutes the offence of forgery, under the statute. At common law, the writing must have a tendency to injure. That tendency must be apparent to the Court; it may be apparent upon the face of the transaction, or it may be made so by the aid of additional facts. To forge a deed, is an instance of the kind first mentioned. Its tendency to injure is apparent; it requires the statement of no additional fact to make that appear. An instance of the latter is, where I make a deed to A. and afterwards one to B, for the same property, and antedate the latter deed, so as to overreach the date of the former. The making the former deed is part of the offence at common law, and must be shown, otherwise, the tendency of the latter deed to injure does not appear. But perhaps this case affords a better illustration of the principle. The Defendant's altering an order drawn by himself on *Avery*, in favor of *Ainsworth*, does not, upon its face, import an injury, neither in its tendency does it injure any one. It may be a proper and a necessary act; but to alter it after it has been circulated, and then to alter it so as to make it different from the truth, as in this case, and thereby to entitle himself to a double credit for its amount, one upon giving the order on *Avery*, and another upon *Ainsworth's* receiving the money from him, shews that the alteration tends to the injury of *Ainsworth*; and if these be the facts, they should have been averred in the indictment, and proved on the trial. Whether they were proved before the Jury, we do not know, and it is entirely unimportant whether they were, or not—they are not charged. The indictment is therefore defective, for in them, in connexion with the alteration of the order, the criminality consists. Without them, the act is harmless. With them, it is highly criminal.—I think, therefore, that the judgment should be arrested.

PER CURIAM.—Judgment reversed.

OBITUARY NOTICE.

It is our mournful duty to record the death of James Fauntleroy Taylor, Attorney-General of the State, which occurred during the present term, after an illness of a few days continuance, which seemed not, to his medical attendants and family, to have any very alarming symptoms, until a few hours before his dissolution.—He was born in Chatham County, in July, 1791, at the residence of his father, Colonel *Philip Taylor*, who had served with distinction in the Revolutionary Army, and at the close of the war, bore a Captain's commission in the line. He died when the subject of this memoir was about three years old, the youngest of a numerous family of children, who were thus consigned to the care of their surviving parent. But it pleased Providence that these arduous duties should devolve on a mother of singular discretion and exalted piety, whose moral strength was fully adequate to her increased burthens, and who has reaped the harvest of all her cares and labour, in the constant affection and gratitude of her children. She still lives to shed the tears of affection over the early grave of her son; but it is not doubted that her grief is tempered and consoled by higher considerations than any which mortal wisdom can afford.

He received the rudiments of a classical education at the Pittsborough Academy, then under the direction of the Reverend *William Bingham*, a teacher well qualified to raise its reputation, by the extent of his acquirements, the purity of his life, and the judgment by which he accommodated the discipline and instruction of the school to the various talents and dispositions of the youth. It is but common justice to those, who have been instrumental in forming the minds of useful and eminent pub-

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lic men, to pay a passing tribute of respect to their memory. This worthy man left a son who pursues with undiminished reputation, the same honourable p ofession with his father.

From the Academy, the subject of this sketch was transferred to the University, where, in 1810, he received the degree of A. B. and left that Institution with the reputation of "a ripe and good scholar."

His legal education was received in the office of Judge *Nash*, at Hillsborough, a gentleman to whom he was always devotedly attached, and for whose kindness, friendship and instruction, he cherished the liveliest gratitude, to the last moment of his life.

He was admitted to the bar in 1812, and in a short time, found himself in possession of an extensive practice, which may in general be considered a misfortune to a young lawyer, whose term of study has been brief and limited; for though it may lead him to wealth, it interrupts that regular course of synthetic study, on which, only, the solid reputation of science can be founded. A quick perception of the merits of a case, a retentive memory, and a remarkably sound and discriminating judgment, enabled him, in some degree, to overcome this difficulty. What he did not accurately perceive, he knew where readily to find, and as genius can take large strides in every science, he could prepare himself for every emergency, by disentangling the most complicated, and digesting the most abstruse subjects. His voice was clear, sonorous, and well adapted to command the attention of a large audience; in some of its keys it was peculiarly harmonious; his pronunciation was distinct, nervous, and impressive; his mode of argument close, connected, and usually conclusive; and as he sought to inform he understanding, he was seldom diverted from his object by the meteors of imagination:

> "His words bore sterling weight: nervous and strong,
> "In manly tides of sense they roll'd along."

The office he held was conferred upon him by the Legislature of 1825; and he entered upon its duties at a time when the criminal justice of the Circuit to which he was attached, was greatly relaxed, from causes which it is not our province to detail. He knew what exertions the duties of his office required from him, and how much public expectation had been awakened by his appointment. He resolved to use every effort of study, and attention to scientific details, to render the law triumphant; and to act upon the maxim of the profound patriot of antiquity, who concludes an eloquent description of law and liberty, by saying— June 1828. Obituary notice.

——Legum denique idcirco omnes servi sumus
Ut liberi esse possimus. Cic. pro Cluen.

He continued during his brief passage through this perishable state, to discharge the duties of the office with a zeal for the interests of justice, and an enlightened energy, of which the effects were soon manifest, in the increased security of life and property, and the consequent advancement of the public happiness. But though the sepulchre shrouds from mortal view, the decaying relics of humanity, it should record the claim of public services to distinction, and point out the dignity of virtue to imitation. It belongs to Biography, which is "History teaching by example," to enshrine the memory of the patriotic and the good, that the impressive lessons afforded by their lives, may enlighten and animate those who are advancing in the same career of excellence.

His loss to the public will be severely felt; but to his family and friends it is irreparable—for all who were intimately connected with him, feel that with him, one great charm of their existence is gone, leaving a void in their hearts which can never be filled up. In the domestic scene, and the intercourse of friendship, he was, in the highest degree, engaging and affectionate. Here the warmth of his heart, the activity of his benevolence, and the buoyancy of his spirit, displayed themselves in the

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most attractive forms. On his many virtues as a husband, a father, and a friend, we could expatiate with feelings of sincere conviction of their existence, and profound grief for their premature loss; but our limits forbid, and we must close this imperfect sketch, in the belief, that his character has become the property of the Country, and will receive ample justice from the future Historian.

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COSTS.

1. Where a suit abates by the death of one of the parties, each party is liable for his own costs and execution may issue therefor. *Officers & others* v. *Hanan and Zealous Taylor,* 99
2. A party is at all times answerable for his own costs, and though he succeed in the cause, execution may issue against him therefor, if the same cannot be made out of the party cast. *Superior Court Office* v. *David Lockman,* 146
3. A judgment *quando* is a judgment in favor of the Defendant, who is therefore entitled to his costs. *Jesse Battle, adm'r* v. *John Rorke,* 223
4. An infant is liable for the costs of a suit conducted by his *prochien amy,* and upon a judgment of nonsuit, a *fi. fa.* may issue against his property. *Howett* v. *Alexander,* 431
5. Where a judgment of the Superior Court is reversed in part in the Supreme Court, the party in whose favor the judgment was, must pay the costs of the latter Court. *Smith* v. *Shepard,* 461

COVENANT.

1. Where one covenants for himself, without mentioning his heirs, to convey land on a certain event, and dies before that event happens, his administrators are not liable; and it seems that the only remedy is against his heirs in Equity. *John B. Earle* v. *Charles McDowell's adm'rs.* 16
2. A decree in Equity directing a Defendant to execute a deed, and deli-

ver possession of land, is a breach of covenant for quiet enjoyment, and the fact that the decree is founded on notice to him when he purchased, of an equity in the land, does not bar his action. *A. S. Martin* v. *R. Martin*, 413

Vide *Guarantee*, 1.

DAMAGES.

Vide *Slaves*, 6. *Reversal of Judgment. Administrators & Executors*, 7.

DECEIT, ACTION OF.

1. Damages cannot be recovered for the loss of a good bargain. An action will not lie for a deceit in executory contract, respecting the sale of lands. *Quere.* Whether an action will lie for a deceit in the false affirmation of title to land? *William Fugate* v. *Arthur Newsom*, 20
2. Where no loss is occasioned by a falsehood, an action for a deceit will not lie; neither will it when ordinary prudence would have prevented the deception. *John Farrar* v. *Philip Alston*, 69
3. A being surety for B, is falsely informed by C, administrator of B, that the debt is paid; trusting to this representation, A uses no means to secure himself. *Quere.* Does deceit lie? *Ibid.*
4. Moral turpitude in the Defendant is necessary to charge him in an action for a deceit. Therefore, when the Defendant in an action for a deceit in the sale of a slave, had been informed that the slave was unsound, if he does not credit the fact, he is not bound to disclose it. *Hamrick* v. *Hogg*, 350

DEEDS.

1. Contradictory descriptions in a deed, one of which is sufficient to designate the thing granted, shall not frustrate the deed. But if the descriptions can be reconciled, both shall stand. *James Sheppard* v. *Sam. Simpson*, 257
2. Where land was conveyed to one by his mother, and afterwards a moiety of it devised to him by his father, a Sheriff's deed conveying the interest of this person and describing it as "a part of three patents situate, &c. being land devised to him by his father," passed only a moiety. *Ibid.*

Vide *Evidence*, 8.

DEFECTS CURED BY VERDICT.

Vide *Judgment*, 4.

DEPOSITION.

1. A deposition must be sealed up by the commissioners, so as to prevent inspection and alteration; it need not be certified under the seal of the commissioners. *Ward* v. *Ely*, 372
2. Notice to a particular agent to take the deposition of a non-resident witness to be read absolutely, is not supported by a rule authorising notice to that agent to take the deposition of the same witness to be read *de bene esse*, the witness being at the granting of the rule, a resident of this State. And a deposition taken under such circumstances was rejected. *Atha Lindsey* v. *Bartholomew Lee*, 464
3. Notice to take a deposition on a particular day of every week, for three successive months, is insufficient.—*Pedell* v *State Bank*, 483

DESCENT.

1. The next collateral relation to the person last seised, though *ex parte paterna*, shall inherit under the act of 1784, an estate descended *ex parte materna*. And the same rule holds, though this collateral relation be of the half blood, and come *in esse* after the death of the person last seised.—*Den on demise of Ambrose Seville* v. *Addison Whedbee*, 160
2. In the descent of acquired estates, the only qualification necessary to a collateral, is, that he be the nearest relation of the person last seised. In descended estates, he must be of the blood of the first purchaser. *Tully Bell et al.* v. *Dozier & wife*, 333
3. Where an estate was purchased by the father and descended from him, and the Propositus left a mother, a maternal half-brother, paternal uncles of the half blood, and other more distant paternal collaterals: It was held that the *proviso* in the 6th canon of descents (act of 1808) applies to cases where a surviving brother or sister cannot inherit, as well as to cases where none are left, and therefore that a life estate, in the lands,

descended to the mother, and the fee to the maternal uncles of the half-blood. *Ibid.*

DETINUE.

Vide *Possession*, 1, 2.

DEVISE.

1. Devise "that the residue of my real and personal estate, be equally divided between the heirs of my brother John Ford, (he being noticed as living) the heirs of my sister Nancy Stow, the heirs of my sister Sally Ward, & nephew Levi Ward." Held, that the *real estate* must be divided *per stirpes*, and that Levi Ward takes one fourth under the devise to him by name, and a share of the fourth devised to the *heirs* of *Sally Ward* — *Leroy Stowe* v. *Levi Ward*, 67
2. Devise "to the heirs of A." they take in the same proportion as if the estate had descended to them from A. *Ibid.*
3. A devisor devised so much of his land as his wife could cultivate, to her during her life or widowhood, and that his executors should rent out the residue of his cleared land, until his children became of age to take it into possession. The life estate having expired during the nonage of some of the children, it was held that those of age, had a right to an immediate partition of the whole of the land devised. *Hoyle* v. *Huson et al.* 348
4. In a will, real estate does not pass by the words "all my property and possessions, consisting of both personal and perishable," with the further expressions, "that they should pay my debts of it, and the residue to, &c. to have and to hold to them, their heirs and assigns forever." *Doe ex dem of Clark & Clark* v. *Hyman and Bennet*, 382

DOWER.

1. A widow is dowable of land sold after the death of the husband, under a *fi. fa.* tested and levied before.— *Robert D Frost and Wife* v. *Josiah Etheridge*, 30
2. An agreement to sell lands, bars the wife's dower in equity. *Idem.*

EJECTMENT.

Vide *Statute of Limitations*, 2.

ERRONEOUS PROCESS.

1. Erroneous process is a justification to the officer who executes it, but not to the person who sues it out — *Weaver* v. *Cryer & Moore*, 337
2. An execution which issues on a judgment more than a year and a day old, is erroneous. *Ibid.*

Vide *Pleas & Pleadings*, 4.

ERROR.

Vide *Parties to an action*, 2.

EQUITY & EQUITABLE TITLES.

Vide *Covenant* 1, 2. *Dower*, 2. *Trespass*, 3.

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Vide *Sheriff*, 13

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1. A widow remaining in possession as widow, of lands occupied by her husband in his life, is bound by an estoppel, which bound her husband.— *Den ex dem of Bufferlow* v. *Newsom*, 208
2. A jury is bound by an estoppel, and the Court will disregard a finding contrary thereto, except where the party entitled to the estoppel has waived it by misplading. *Ibid.*

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1. When B said he had given negro C to A, held that the will of B, of that date, is admissible to explain his declarations.—*Morisey et ux* v. *Bunting*, 3
2. A record of the conviction of the slave (the master being notified and defending him) is not evidence against the master, unless the latter is charged as an accessory, and then only *ex necessitate*. *Nelson* v. *Evans*, 9
3. When A gave a bond in discharge of one made by B, evidence that the latter was obtained by fraud, of which A had no notice, is not admissible in an action upon the former. *Guy* v. *McLean*, 46
4. The whole and not any detached part of a statement, should be left to the Jury, therefore where a party seeks an advantage under an account, the whole account must be taken together. *Turner* v. *Child*, 133

5. In a criminal prosecution, there being no dispute as to ownership, title papers are evidence to explain the motives of a party's conduct. Hence, where land is sold, and the vendee put a tenant at sufferance out of possession, in an indictment for an assault in this putting out, the deed under which the vendee claims is evidence. *State* v. *Weeks & Biggs*, 135

6. Whether evidence of title can be received to decide the fact of possession between adverse occupants.—*Quere? Ibid.*

7. A judgment and execution were returned to the Justice by the Constable, afterwards, they both searched among the official papers of the former, but could not find them. The Justice and the Plaintiff in the judgment having removed out of the State, it was held, that proof of this search by the Constable, entitled one claiming under this judgment and execution, to give parol evidence of their contents. *Underwood* v. *Lane and another*, 173

8. In an action by the Trustees of a religious Society for a slave, a stranger to the deed of conveyance may prove by parol, an unlawful purpose, in contradiction of the deed. *It seems*, that even a party might offer such proof, for as deeds conclude the parties only when valid, they cannot exclude proof of an unlawful design which avoids them. *Trustees of Quaker Society of Contentnea* v. *Dickerson*, 189

9. A witness who has seen many certificates of survey attached to grants, and purporting to have been made by a surveyor who had been dead many years, is competent, from the knowledge of the writing thus acquired, to prove that a particular plat of survey, is in the hand-writing of the deceased surveyor. *Jones* v. *Huggins*, 223

10. A survey, though ancient, made by direction of the owner of the lands, for his own convenience, is not admissible evidence for him, or those claiming under him. *Ibid*

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12 The records of the County Courts cannot be collaterally impeached in the Superior Courts. Therefore, evidence offered to prove that a judgment of the County Court in another suit, was entered up in the vacation, without the order of the Court, is inadmissible *Reid* v. *Kelly*, 313

13. Where an administrator takes the book-debt oath, and swears that the original entry is in the hand-writing of a person who has not after diligent enquiry, been heard of for seven years, and that he knows of no person who can prove his hand-writing, the account was held to be sufficiently proved *Stevelie adm'r of Ferrell* v. *Greeniee*, 317

14 General reputation and cohabitation, are evidence of a marriage in all cases, even between mulattoes and whites, except in actions of *crim. con.* *Weaver* v. *Cryer & Moore*, 337

15. In an action of trespass for killing a slave, evidence of the slave's good character is admissible to repel the presumption of his improper conduct. *Pierce* v *Myrick*, 345

16. An accomplice is a competent witness for the prosecution, on the trial of his associate. *State* v. *Wier*, 363

17. When a bill of sale is introduced as a Forgery, for the purpose of supporting the credit of a witness, the subscribing witness need not be produced on the trial. *Ibid*

18. An agent, who has given a receipt for a judgment and collected the amount of it, may be subjected in assumpsit for money had and received, without producing the judgment on the trial. *Martin* v. *Williams adm'r. of Latham*, 386

19. A wife is an incompetent witness when her husband is interested, upon principles of policy arising out of the relations of husband and wife, not because she is interested in the suit, nor on account of her legal identity with her husband. *Daniel et al.* v. *Proctor et al* 428

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dence against one who was not a party or privy to them. Therefore, where the question was, whether A had refused to guaranty a bank note to B, it was held, that the refusal of A to guaranty the same note, on offering it to C immediately before it was passed to B, but not in his presence, was *res inter alios acta* and inadmissible. *Anderson* v. *Hawkins*, 445

21. The declarations of a creditor, or his general agent, that his debt is discharged, is *prima facie* evidence of payment. *State Bank* v. *Wilson & Parker*, 454

22. The testimony of a witness who is corruptly false in any particular, should be entirely disregarded by the Jury; and where they were instructed that they might, exercising a sound discretion, reject part of the testimony which they did not believe, and act on part which they did believe it was held to be erroneous.—*State* v. *Jim*, 508

23. *Dictum* by HENDERSON, Judge, that a witness may speak of information derived from a negro, upon which acts are predicated, in explanation of those acts. *State* v. *Barden*, 518

Vide *Slander*, 1. *Writ. Perjury*, 1. *Pleas & Pleadings*, 3. *Wills*, 1, 2.

EXECUTION.

1. A levy upon land under a Justice's judgment, made more than three months after the date of the execution, is void; and a *sci. fa.* against heirs founded on it, should be dismissed. *McEachin et al.* v. *McFarland et al.* 444

Vide *Dower*, 1. *Erroneous process*, 2. *Fraud & Fraudulent Conveyance*, 3.

EXECUTORS

Vide *Administrators & Executors*.

FORGERY.

Vide *Indictment*, 8.

EXECUTOR DE SON TORT.

1. An intermeddling for which there is a *colourable* right, will not make a wrongful executorship. *Turner* v. *Child*, 25

2. Where A sold the property of B, as his agent, and *after the death of B*, collected the proceeds; this does not make him an *executor de son tort*. *Ibid.*

3. Where there is an administrator, acts for which the agent is responsible to the Administrator, will not make him an *executor de son tort*. *Ibid.*

4. Where an agent appointed one under him to sell the goods, and collect the debts of his principal, and upon the death of the latter, notifies his substitute that the agency was at an end, if the substitute acts in the agency after such notice, he becomes *executor de son tort*. *Turner* v. *Child*, 331

5. An *executor de son tort* cannot retain for his debt. *Ibid.*

DAYS OF GRACE.

Vide *Usury*, 2.

FRAUD AND FRAUDULENT CONVEYANCE.

1. Possession retained by the vendor of chattels, does not *per se* make the sale fraudulent in law. It is but presumptive evidence of fraud proper to be left to a Jury. To rebut this presumption, the vendee may show consideration passed, though none be stated in the bill of sale. *Howell* v. *Elliott*, 76

2. It is fraudulent in law for the grantee to survey his own entry. Therefore, when this fact was found by the jury, and further that the survey was fairly made, it was held that the grant must be vacated. *Greenlee* v. *Tate et al. heirs of Tate*, 300

3. Fraudulent conveyance is good between the parties, and a creditor cannot reach the property except by execution. *Williford* v. *Conner*, 379

Vide *Evidence*, 8. *Grant*, 2.

GIFT.

1. Deliberation and sedateness are not more necessary to a gift than to a sale, in each they are only evidence of the *animus disponendi*. *Morisey et ux* v. *Bunting*, 8

2. A delivery is essential to a gift.—Where the obligee gives the obligor an order for the delivery of the bond, which was not obeyed, it was held that the gift being incomplete, might be revoked, and that resuming pos-

session and bringing suit, was a revocation. *Picot adm'r of Leggett* v. *Sanderson*, 309
Vide *Slaves*, 2, 3. *Possession*, 4, 5.

GRANT.

1. A grant cannot be vacated without making the grantee or his heirs a party, although his interest in it has been assigned. *Bradley* v. *Souther et al.* 427
2. Fraud which vacates a grant, being a compound question of law and of fact, a general verdict that a grant was fraudulently obtained, is not sufficient foundation for a judgment of repeal. *Crow* v. *Heirs of Holland*, 481

Vide *Fraud*, 1.

GUARANTEE.

1. In articles for the purchase of land, whereby the purchaser covenanted to pay in notes "such as he would be responsible for," the covenant binds him as a guarantor. *Ward* v. *Ely*, 372
2. What is due diligence is a question of law, and where a guarantor was bound after due course of law against the principal debtor, neglect to enter a judgment against bail after two *nihils*, discharges him. *Battle* v. *Little's adm'rs.* 381
3. By Taylor and Henderson, Judges. A general letter of credit addressed to no particular individual, is not a guarantee, but a proposal for one, and notice of an advance on the faith of it must be given to the guarantor. By Hall, Judge, such a letter is an absolute guarantee, and notice of an advance is unnecessary to charge the guarantor. *Shewell* v. *Knox*, 404
4. What degree of diligence a creditor must use to bind a guarantor. *Quere?* But loss from neglect on his part is matter of defence for the guarantor, and if not shown by him on the trial, a new trial will not be granted simply because indulgence has been shown to the principal debtor. *Ibid.*
5. Where a purchaser of goods transfers without endorsement, a note in payment, he thereby guarantees that the sum expressed in the note is due, and constitutes the seller his agent to sue for the same in his name; and if suit be fairly brought and duly prosecuted, and a set-off is established by the maker, the seller may resort to the purchaser for the price of the goods sold. *Jones* v. *Yeargain*, 420
6. An accountable receipt for a judgment under seal, which vests the equitable title in the receiver, in law only binds him to pay what he receives on it. *Bird* v. *Ross*, 472
7. Upon such an assignment, if the assignee gives full value, and has no day of payment, without an agreement to the contrary, the assignor guarantees that the judgment can be collected. But if less than the amount is given, or day of payment had the assignor only guarantees the existence of the judgment. *Ibid.*

Vide *Jurisdiction*, 1.

HALF-BLOOD.

Vide *Descent*, 1, 3.

HAND-WRITING.

Vide *Evidence*, 9, 13.

HIRING OUT FOR COSTS, &c.

1. The act of 1787, authorising persons convicted on indictment or presentment, and unable or unwilling to pay the costs, to be hired out by the Sheriff, is repealed by the act of 1797, (*Rev. c.* 484). *State* v. *Hood*, 506

HUSBAND AND WIFE.

1. A slave hired out, is a chose in the possession of the owner. Therefore when the slave of a feme sole was, before her marriage, hired for a year, and the husband died during the term, the property does not survive to the wife, but vests in the personal representatives of the husband. *Whitaker, adm'r. of McLean* v. *Whitaker, ex'r of Taylor*, 310
2. Slaves of an infant *feme* pass to her husband *jure mariti*, although they were hired out by her guardian before the marriage, and the husband died during the term. *Granberry ex'r of Frazier* v. *Mhoon & wife*, 456

Vide *Evidence*, 14.

INDICTMENT.

1. An indictment charging that the Defendant stole "a parcel of oats" is sufficiently certain. *State* v. *Brown*, 137
2. When the death does not ensue within a year and a day after a wound

is inflicted, the law presumes that it proceeded from some other cause — Hence, an indictment, upon which it does not appear that the death happened within a year and a day after the wound was given, is fatally defective. *State* v. *Orrell*, 139

3. In an indictment for a rape, the words "forcibly and against the will" are necessary. Hence, an indictment for a capital felony, under the act of 1823, not containing those words, was held to be fatally defective — *State* v *Jim*, 142

4. In an indictment, false spelling which does alter the meaning of the word (as *sive* for *sieve*) is no ground for arresting the judgment. *State* v. *Molier*, 263

5. The act of 1825, was passed to prevent the asportation of slaves by persons having those facilities to do it, which a connexion with a ship gives. The act of concealing a slave on ship board, with the intent to carry him from the State, by a person having no connexion with the ship, is not within the mischief. An indictment on the statute, which did not charge the prisoner to be in any way connected with the ship, in which the slave was concealed, was therefore held to be fatally defective. *State* v. *Johnston*, 360

6. In an indictment for perjury, it is sufficient to charge generally that the false oath was material to the trial of the issue upon which it was taken; it is not necessary to show particularly, the manner in which it was material. *State* v *Mumford* 519

7. A general averment falsifying the testimony, is not sufficient, every fact falsely deposed to, must be distinctly negatived. *Ibid.*

8. At common law to constitute forgery, the intent to defraud must either be apparent from the false making, or become so by extrinsic facts.— Therefore an indictment, which charged the false making to have been in the alteration of an order, given by the Defendant, without charging that the alteration was made after it was circulated, and had been taken up by him, was held to be fatally defective. *State* v. *Greenlee*, 523

INFANCY.

1. A promise, after full age, to pay a debt contracted during infancy, may be inferred; it is however an inference of fact, and is to be drawn only by the jury. *Alexander* v. *Hutchinson*, 13

Vide *Costs*, 4.

INTEREST.

Vide *Usury*, 1, 2. *Payment*, 2.

JUDGMENT.

1. A judgment against a Defendant named in the writ, but not made a party either by service, public notice or attaching his estate, is merely void and should be disregarded when produced, on *nul tiel record*. *Armstrong et al.* v. *Harshaw*, 187

2. A judgment *quando* is a judgment in favour of the administrator. *Battle adm'r* v *Rorke*, 228

3. A suretyship to a stay of execution is tantamount to a judgment; and the proper remedy against the stayor, when the judgment is dormant, is an action of debt, which may be brought against the surety alone — *Humphreys* v. *Buie*, 378

4. Whether the seal of a Justice is necessary to a valid judgment, *Quere?* But the want of it, as an objection, is too late after verdict. *Ibid.*

5. A Justice's judgment must be evidenced by a written memorial, made at the time of its rendition. Therefore when a judgment was confessed before a magistrate out of his county, and an entry thereof made on the warrant, and afterwards a new confession was had before the Justice, at a subsequent time, within his county, but no written entry thereof made, and no alteration of the date of the old entry. It was held that there was, in law no judgment. *Hamilton* v. *Parish*, 415

6. One who enters himself as surety for the stay of execution before a Justice, is not thereby estopped to show, that the supposed judgment is in law a nullity. *Ibid*

Vide *Administrators & Executors*, 5.

JUDGMENT SUMMARY.

Vide *Sheriff*, 2.

JUDGE'S CHARGE.

1. If no error is assigned in the charge of the Judge, and none appears upon the record, the judgment of the Superior Court is of course affirmed.—*Stephenson* v. *Jones*, 15

JURISDICTION.

1. A single magistrate has no jurisdiction of actions founded upon a covenant of guaranty. *Dwyer* v *Cutler*, 312
2. It belongs to every Court to correct its own records, and in this respect a Superior has no other than an appellate jurisdiction over an inferior Court. *Reid* v *Kelly*. 313
3. Single magistrates have jurisdiction for balances due upon executed contracts, for which debt or assumpsit will lie, but they cannot give damages for the breach of an executory contract. *Tyer* v. *Harper*, 387
4. Where the Defendant agreed to pay a certain price per hundred for carrying goods, and to deliver a certain quantity, but delivered less; it was held that a Justice of the Peace had no jurisdiction over that part of the contract which had not been performed. *Ibid.*
5. Goods were sold to be paid for in notes, the vendor agreeing to take them back if not good; it was held, that upon tender and refusal, the vendor might resort to the original sale, and that a single magistrate had jurisdiction, notwithstanding the guarantee. *Bell* v. *Ballance*, 391
6. The Court in which an issue of *devisavit vel non* was finally tried, is the proper one in which to demand a reprobate, and where the trial was in the Superior Court, a demand for reprobate in the County Court was held to be erroneous. *Hodges, adm'r. of Mariner* v. *Jasper*, 459

JURY.

1. A jury, when charged with the trial of a capital offence, cannot be discharged without returning a verdict, unless for some cause which human sagacity can neither foresee nor prevent: Therefore, where a jury were charged with the trial of a prisoner for murder, and before they returned their verdict, the term of the Court expired, and the jury separated, it was held that the prisoner could not be tried again. *In the matter of Robert Spier*, 491
2. The provision of the Constitution, that 'no person shall be subject for the same offence to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb,' not only forbids a second trial for the same offence, but also a second trial where the jury have been once charged upon a perfect indictment, and were not prevented from returning a verdict by the act of God, or the request of the prisoner *Idem.*

Vide *Estoppel*, 2.

LEVY.

Vide *Execution.*

LOST PAPERS.

Vide *Evidence*, 7.

MURDER.

Vide *Indictment*, 2. *Verdict.*

NEW TRIAL.

1. A new trial is matter of discretion, and the refusal to grant one, cannot be assigned as error. The Supreme Court is a Court of errors in law, and the case stated by the Judge is a substitute in our practice for a bill of exceptions. And this Court cannot grant a new trial because the Court below refused one, for that refusal is not error; but where the Court below errs, as in receiving evidence, instructing the Jury, or the like, this Court orders a *venire de novo*, as a means of correcting such error. *State Bank* v. *Hunter, Ex'r of Hunter, and others*, 100
2. Where the facts in a special verdict are not sufficient to dispose of all the issues submitted to the jury, no judgment can be given thereon, but a *venire facias de novo* should be awarded. *Humphreys* v *Buie*, 184
3. Where a case is so defectively stated as not to enable the Court to perceive the points intended to be presented, a new trial will be awarded. *State* v. *Upton*, 268
4. In trespass, where not guilty and a justification are pleaded, and the jury find the first issue for the defendant, the rejection of admissible testimony pertinent to the latter only, is

not ground for a new trial. *Pierce* v. *Myrick*, 345
5. When a party knows of objections to testimony before the trial of a cause, & neglects to avail himself of it at the trial, it furnishes no grounds for a new trial. *Barnes* v. *Dickenson*, 346
6. If a question of law be improperly submitted to a jury, and they decide it correctly, a new trial will not be granted. *Smith* v. *Shepard*, 461
Vide *Appeal*, 7.

NUDUM FACTUM.
Vide *Consideration*.

PAPERS PRODUCED UNDER A SUBPŒNA DUCES TECUM.
1. A deed produced under a *subpœna duces tecum*, was left after the trial among the papers in the office, held, that it was subject to the controul of the party producing it. *Carter* v. *Graves*, 74

PARTIES TO AN ACTION.
1. In an action of assumpsit against a carrier for damage to goods, a dormant partner need not join. *Wilkes* v. *Clark*, 178
2. The same person cannot be both plaintiff and defendant in the same cause. Where two executors confessed a judgment to a partnership, of which one of them was a member, it was held to be error in fact, and for it the judgment was reversed. *Pearson* v. *Nesbit*, 315
Vide *Grant*, 1.

PAYMENT.
1. An account signed by one with another, whose bond the first holds for a larger amount, should be left to the jury as evidence of a payment on the bond. *McDowell and another, adm'rs of McDowell* v. *Tate*, 249
2. Payments made on account of a debt, are first to be applied to the interest which has accrued thereon; and this is the rule in cases where it is allowed by juries in their discretion, as well as where it is given by positive enactment. *Peebles* v *Gee*, 341

PERJURY.
1. Although the testimony of two witnesses is necessary to convict of perjury, yet the direct oath of one witness, and proof of declarations of the prisoner inconsistent with the oath in which perjury is assigned, is sufficient. *State* v. *Molier*, 263
2. Perjury is properly assigned in an oath taken before a Court of competent jurisdiction, although the witness was erroneously sworn. *Idem.*
Vide *Indictment*, 6, 7.

PETTY LARCENY.
1. One who is privy to a petty larceny before the fact, is a principal. *State* v. *Barden*, 518

PLEAS AND PLEADING.
1. It seems, that if *non detinet* and the statute of limitations are both pleaded, and the jury find "all the issues in favor of the defendant," the Supreme Court will not examine the correctness of the charge on the latter plea. *Morisey and wife* v. *Bunting*, 3
2. The word "set off," entered by a defendant, with the general issue, shall be taken as a plea in bar, where the amount is equal to, or greater than the plaintiff's demand—where less, it shall be taken as notice of set off only. *McDowell & another, admrs. of McDowell* v. *Tate*, 249
3. Of several pleas, each is separate and independent, as if contained in different records. Therefore, where in an action for a libel, the defendant pleaded not guilty and a justification, it was held, that the admission of the libel contained in the latter plea could not be used either to estop the defendant to insist on his denial, or as evidence to prove the publication on the issue joined on the former plea. *Whitaker* v. *Freeman*, 271, decided in the Circuit Court for the District of North-Carolina, by Marshall, Chief-Justice of the United States.
4. Where the officer and the Plaintiff, in an erroneous *fi. fa* are jointly sued in trover for property sold under it, the former may show his justification under the general issue, although it be jointly pleaded. If, however, they had joined in pleading the justification specially, the plea would be bad as to both. *Weaver* v. *Cryer and Moore*, 337
5. A plea is not bad for duplicity which

alleges several facts dependant upon each other, tending to one point and triable upon one issue: Therefore, a plea in abatement to an attachment, averring that a bond and affidavit were not taken and returned, is good upon general demurrer. And it seems that an averment that no bond, &c were taken, and *the said bond, &c. so taken* were not returned, is equivalent to an averment that they were not taken and returned, and that the repugnancy does not vitiate. *State Bank* v. *Hinton and Brame*, 397

6. A plea of set-off is in nature of a cross action, and the plaintiff may reply several matters thereto. *Worth* v. *Fentress*, 419
7. In practice, where no replication is actually entered, a general replication is understood. *Idem.*
8. When the defendant pleaded a set-off and other pleas, and no replication to either was entered, and after a verdict and new trial was awarded, leave was given to the plaintiff to reply the statute of limitations to the plea of set off: It was held, that this was no waiver of the general replication before presumed, but that the plaintiff might, on the second trial, insist on both. *Idem.*

Vide *Assumpsit.*

POSSESSION.

1. In detinue, if the defendant relies upon his possession, either as a bar to the action, or as a part of his title, the burthen of proving its length lies upon him. *Darden* v. *Allen*, 466
2. Every possession is presumed to be upon the title, and for the benefit of the possessor, and he who avers the contrary takes the burthen of proof. *Idem.*
3. No length of possession in a bailee, will either destroy the title, or bar the action of the bailor. *Idem.*
4. Where a parent puts a slave into the possession of a child, without an express parol gift, this possession is not adverse, and does not divest the title of the parent, or bar his action. *Justice* v. *Cobbs and Jeter*, 469
5. *Dictum* by HALL, Judge, that an express parol gift may be ripened into indefeasible title by a possession of three years. *Idem.*

Vide *Fraud*, 1.

PRACTICE.

1. The acts of 1817 and 1820, chapters 937 and 1046, requiring joint suits to be brought against the obligor and endorsers of bonds, &c. do not prevent the defendants from demanding separate trials. *Anderson & another* v. *Hunt & Hawkins*, 298
2. Applications for separate trials should be made at an early stage in the cause: Therefore, an application made after the cause was called, was rejected, as too late. *Idem.*
3. If a plaintiff neglects to take an objection upon a mere matter of form, he shall not have a new trial in case the verdict is against him. *Moore* v. *McNairy ex'r. of Peebles*, 319
4. A Judge of the Superior Court has power to continue a cause upon the condition of reading absolutely the deposition of a resident witness; and the party accepting the terms, cannot, on the trial, insist upon the production of the witness. *Den ex dem. of Walker and Wife* v. *Fen & Greenlee*, 367
5. A plaintiff in attachment having made affidavit and given bond, which the Justice neglected to return, had leave to withdraw a demurrer to a plea in abatement, & file them *nunc pro tunc*. *State Bank* v. *Hinton & Brame*, 397
6. After the defendant has pleaded to a warrant, so as to meet the case made by it, the Plaintiff cannot upon an appeal, declare in such a manner as to render the plea ineffectual. *Downey* v. *Young*, 432
7. If judgment *quando* is not entered up at the trial term, it may be afterward *nunc pro tunc*, if third persons be not injured by it. *Gregory* v. *Haughton, Adm'r of Hooker*, 442

Vide *Pleas and Pleading.*

PROFANE SWEARING.

1. Profane swearing charged to be a public nuisance, is punishable by indictment, notwithstanding the power to proceed summarily, given to the Justices of the Peace by the act of 1741. *State* v. *Ellar*, 267

QUANTUM MERUIT.

Vide *Tender and money paid into Court.*

RAPE.

Vide *Indictment*, 3.

RECORDS.
Vide *Evidence*, 12 *Jurisdiction*, 2.

REFERENCE.
Vide *Arbitration*.

REGISTRATION.
1. A bill of sale for a slave must be registered in the county where the vendee resides. *Underwood* v. *Lane et al*, 173

RELIGIOUS SOCIETIES.
1. By the act of 1796, religious societies or their trustees, have not a general capacity of acquisition; they can only take for the use of the society: Hence, by a conveyance of slaves to the trustees, for purposes forbidden by the policy of the law, nothing passes *Trustees of the Quaker Society of Contentnea* v. *Dickerson*, 189

REMOVAL OF CAUSES.
1. Where, on the removal of a cause the transcript does not state either the appointment of a foreman to the grand jury, or a motion for the removal, they may be inferred from other entries on the record. *State* v. *Wier*, 363

REVERSAL OF JUDGMENT.
1. If damages are given beyond the penalty of the bond, and that is the only error on the record, the judgment will be reversed as to the excess alone. *Smith* v. *Shepard*, 461

SALE AT AUCTION.
1. The purchaser of a slave at auction, where the terms were that bond and security were to be given before the property passed, obtains a title, although the bond of another is taken for the purchase money. *Shelton* v. *Yancey*, 370

SALE, BILL OF.
Vide *Registration Slaves*, 3, 4.

SET-OFF.
Vide *Pleas and Pleading*, 2, 6, 8.

SHERIFF.
1. Where a levy on personals was made under a *fi. fa.* and lands in lieu thereof were sold by the Sheriff, without levy or advertisement, at the request the debtor, an bid off by A, and B paid the sum bid to the Sheriff, under a parol agreement that the Sheriff should convey to him: held, that as an *official* act of the Sheriff, his deed passed the estate. *Shamburger* v. *Kennedy, adm'r of Hussey*, 1
2. Where judgment is entered summarily, against the sureties of a Sheriff, upon a proper case it will be set aside. *Crumpler et al.* v. *Governor*, 52
3. In a bond given for a specific object, general words shall be construed with reference only to that object. *Idem.*
4. Therefore, where a bond is given with a condition that A M shall "collect the *county contingent tax*, and in all things perform his duty as Sheriff" held that the public taxes cannot be recovered on it. *Idem.*
5. The county tax cannot be recovered of the Sheriff upon the official bond required by the act of 1777 *Governor, for the use of Campbell, County Trustee* v *Barr et al.* 65
6. The return of a Sheriff that a *fi. fa.* is satisfied, is conclusive upon his sureties in an action upon his official bond. *Governor for the use of the State Bank* v. *Twitty et al.* 153
7. A Sheriff's bond, payable to the Governor and his successors, in a sum different from that directed by law, cannot be sued in the name of the successor. *Idem.*
8. A sale under a *venditioni exponas* of lands, or with or without a *venditioni* of goods levied on under a *fi. fa.* is an act done in execution of the authority given by the writ under which the levy was made. *Therefore*, when such a sale was made in 1820, under a levy made before, it was held, that the Sheriff's refusal to pay over the money raised by the sale, was no breach of his official bond for 1820. *Governor to the use of Holliday's ex'r.* v. *Eastwood and others*, 157
9. A *venditioni* can issue only to the Sheriff who made the levy. *Idem.*
10. Where the condition of a bond has appropriate words to secure the performance of a certain class of duties, imposed by law on the Sheriff, general terms superadded thereto (though large enough to include all his official duties) shall not extend *the liabilities*

of the surety, to other duties for which by law a separate bond is directed to be given. *Governor to the use of the County Trustee* v. *Matlock et al.* 214

11. A deputation of necessity expires with the office on which it depends. Therefore, where a Sheriff appointed a deputy who gave bond for his faithful conduct "*during his continuance*" therein, and the Sheriff was re-appointed, and the deputy continued to act under him for several years, it was held, that the words "*during, &c*" should be restricted to the first year, for the deputation then expired, and whether even express words could have extended the liability further? Quere? *Banner* v. *Murray et al* 218
12. A sale made by the Sheriff on the return day of the *fi fa* is good. *Ben on demise of Taylor et al* v. *Fen and Gaskins*, 295
13. A Sheriff is not bound to take notice that the defendant in a *ca. sa* is not entitled to the benefit of the act of 1822; and where, without actual notice that the contract on which the action was brought was made before the first day of May, 1823, on executing a *ca sa.* he took bond pursuant to that act, it was held not to be an escape. *Jones* v. *Dunn, Sheriff of Wake*, 326
14. By the act of 1819, (Rev. c. 999,) the Sheriff who is in office on the 1st day of April, in each year, is bound for the taxes collectable during that year, although his term may expire before they can be collected. Therefore, where a Sheriff was elected after the 1st day of April, and resigned in February ensuing, he is not liable for the collection of any taxes. *Lenoir, Chairman*, v. *Veliborn and others*, 451
15. A Sheriff who was elected in January, 1820, and to whom, before the 1st of April ensuing, the tax lists for 1819 were delivered, is bound for their collection. *Dickey, Chairman*, v. *Alley et al.* 453
16. If a Sheriff is elected after the 1st of April, and voluntarily receives from his predecessor the tax lists then collectable, is he bound to collect them? Quere. *Idem.*

Vide *Attachment*, 1.

SHERIFF'S DEED.

Vide *Sheriff*, 1. *Deed*, 2.

SHERIFF'S BOND.

Vide *Sheriff*, 3, 4, 5, 7, 8, 10.

SHERIFF'S SURETIES.

Vide *Sheriff* 2, 6, 10.

SHERIFF'S DEPUTY.

Vide *Sheriff*, 11.

SHERIFF'S RETURN.

Vide *Sheriff*, 6.

SHERIFF'S SALE.

Vide *Sheriff*, 12.

SLANDER, ORAL AND WRITTEN.

1. In an action for words, charging the Plaintiff with perjury in a particular suit, he is not bound to produce the record of that suit. *McDonald* v. *Murchison*, 7
2. In slander, the Defendant may prove a general report of the truth of the words spoken in mitigation of damages, but not in justification. *Nelson* v. *Evans*, 9
3. A count charging the Defendant with speaking slanderous words, is not supported by proof that he maliciously procured another to speak them. *Watts* v. *Greenlee*, 210
4. A declaration for a libel must undertake to set out the very words; to give the substance and effect is not sufficient, and if on the trial, the libel produced does not correspond with that set out, the Plaintiff must fail, since no reason can be assigned why the Plaintiff should not be required to prove what he is required to allege. *Whitaker* v. *Freeman*, 271.—Decided in the Circuit Court for the District of N. Carolina, by MARSHALL, C. J. of the United States.

SLAVES.

1. In the trial of a slave for a capital felony under the act of 1823, he is entitled to a Jury of slave owners.—*State* v. *Jim*. 142
2. The act of 1806, requiring gifts of slaves to be authenticated by writing, cannot be evaded by a fictitious sale; therefore where the donor gave the donee the purchase money, and then

sold and delivered the slave, receiving back the money; this was held to be a gift and void without a deed. *Smith & wife* v. *Yeates*, 302

3. It seems that a writing conveying a slave, is void as a bill of sale, or a deed of gift, unless attested by a subscribing witness. *Ibid.*

4. It seems also, that the sale and delivery of a slave, is good without a bill of sale, notwithstanding the act of 1821. *Ibid.*

5. In questions of slavery or freedom, a presumption of slavery arises from a black skin, but none from that of a mulatto. *Scott* v. *Williams*, 376

6. In questions of this kind, the amount of the damages is within the discretion of the Jury, and where the Plaintiff's mother a free woman, had been indented to the Defendant's father, and the Plaintiff given to the Defendant as a slave, a direction to the Jury that they might give substantial damages, was held to be proper.—*Ibid.*

Vide *Trespass*, 1. *Evidence*, 2, 15, 23.

STATUTES CONSTRUED OR COMMENTED UPON

1715, c. 2. Morisey v. Bunting, 3
Earle v. McDowell, 16
Doe ex dem. of McRae v. Alexander, 321
c. 10. Washington v. Hunt, 475
1741, c. 28. State Bank v. Hunter, 100
c. 30. The State v. Ellar, 267
1756, c. 57. Stevelie v. Greenlee, 317
1777, c. 115, s. 13. Boyden v. Odeneal, 171
s. 26. State Bank v. Hunter, 100
s. 62. Tyer v. Harper, 387
s. 75 Ladd v Hairston, 368
s. 90. Superior Court Office v. Lockman, 146
c. 118. Crumpler v. Governor, 52
Governor v. Burr, 65
c. 129. Governor v. Burr, 65
1784, c. 204, Seville v. Whedbee, 160
Frost et ux. v. Etheridge, 30
Daniel v. Proctor, 428
c. 219, Crumpler v. Governor, 252
c. 225, Doe ex dem. of Galloway v. Yates, 296
1787, c. 267. The State v. Hood, 506
1792, c. 363. Underwood v. Lane, 173
1793, c. 381. The State v. Jim, 142
1794, c. 414. Tyer v. Harper, 387
Hamilton v. Parrish, 415
1795, c. 433. Davidson v. Robinson, 89
1796, c. 457. Quaker Society v. Dickinson, 189
c. 460. Ladd v. Hairston, 368
1797, c. 484. The State v. Hood, 506
c. 488. Davidson v. Robinson. 89
1799, c. 536. Daniel v Proctor, 428
1803, c. 627. McEachin v. McFarland, 444
1806, c. 701. Smith v. Yeates, 302
Justice v. Cobbs, 469
1808, c. 739. Bell v. Dozier, 333
1810, c. 793. Judges v. Washington, 152
1813, c. 862. Ladd v. Hairston, 368
1817, c. 937. Anderson v. Hunt, 298
1818, c. 962. Carter v. Graves, 74
State Bank v. Hunter, 100
1819, c. 999. Lenoir v. Wellborn, 451
Dickey v. Alley, 453
1820, c. 1045. Dwyer v. Cutler, 312
c. 1046 Anderson v. Hunt, 298
c. 1055. Darden v. Allen, 466
1822, c. 1131. Fulsum v. Gregory, 235
Jones v. Dunn, 326
1823, c. 1229. The State v. Jim, 142
1825, c. 1289. The State v. Johnson, 360

STATUTE OF LIMITATIONS.

1. A residence in another State, is not a residence *beyond seas*, within the saving of the act of limitations. *Earle* v. *Dickson and McDowell adm'rs. of McDowell*, 16

2. The saving clause of the act of 1715, preserves the right of one of several co-heirs who is within the proviso, although the other co-heirs are under no disability, and although they are barred. Therefore, in ejectment by three co-heirs, upon a joint demise, two of whom were free from disability, but the other under coverture, judgment may be rendered against the Plaintiff upon the titles of these under no disability, and in his favour upon the title of the *feme covert*. *Den ex dem. of McRae* v. *Fen and Alexander*, 328

SUBSCRIBING WITNESS.

Vide *Slaves*. 3. *Evidence*, 17.

STAY OF EXECUTION.

Vide *Judgment*, 3. 6.

SURVEY.

Vide *Evidence*, 10. *Fraud*, 2.

TAXES.

Vide *Sheriff*, 4, 5, 14, 15, 16.

TENDER AND MONEY PAID INTO COURT.

1. Upon a *quantum meruit*, where the Defendant pleaded a tender and money paid into Court, it seems that he is not estopped to show a special contract. *Downey* v. *Young*, 432

TENDER & REFUSAL.

1. Goods were sold to be paid for in notes, the vendee agreeing to take them back if not good. It was held, that the insolvency of the payers authorized the vendor to return them immediately, and that upon tender and refusal, he was remitted to his contract for goods sold. And that the tender was good, although the vendor had parted with the notes, and got possession of them solely for the purpose of making the tender, under an engagement to return them. *Bell* v. *Balance*, 391

TRESPASS.

1. Trespass *vi et armis*, is the proper remedy for an injury of which the Defendant is the immediate cause, tho' it happen by accident or misfortune. *Therefore*, for beating a drum in the highway, where a wagon and team are passing, by which the horses take fright, run away and damage the wagon, this action may be supported by the owner. *Loubz* v. *Hafner and another* 185
2. In trespass for killing a slave, an outrage by the slave, less than a threatened felony, will justify the killing. *Pierce* v. *Myrick*, 345
3. A person who enters into the possession of and under an equitable title, with the consent of the legal owner of the fee, acquires no estate of any kind or degree in it, and the legal owner may maintain trespass *quare clausum fregit* for an injury to the inheritance. *Jones et ux.* v. *Taylor*, 434
4. If three persons commit a trespass upon property, in the presence of the person in possession, their number makes it indictable, although actual force is not used. *State* v. *Simpson & Fisher*, 504

Vide *New Trial*, 4.

TROVER.

1. An act of ownership over personal property, inconsistent with the rights of others, is a conversion. Therefore where an administrator exposes property of his intestate at public sale, and buys it in himself, this is a conversion as to persons having a title to the property. *Carraway* v. *Burbank*, 306

TRUST.

1. A man cannot hold in trust for himself; therefore where a slave was conveyed to A, in trust for A for life, with remainders over. *Held*, that the whole interest vested i[illegible]lutely and the limitations over could not take effect. *Butler et al.* v. *Godley adm'r. of Godley*, 94

USURY.

1. Taking interest in advance by a Bank, upon discounting a negotiable security, though payable directly to the Bank, is not usurious. *State Bank* v. *Hunter ex'r. et al.* 100
2. Deducting interest for the days of grace upon discounting a bond, is not usurious, though the obligee is not entitled to the days of grace, the parties supposing that on such an instrument he was entitled. *Ibid.*

VERDICT.

1. Upon a conviction of murder, the proper and formal entry of the verdict is "guilty of the *felony and murder* in the manner and form he stands charged, &c." but where the Jury thus responded, and the entry was "guilty in manner and form as charged," the finding was held sufficient, and the prisoner not entitled to his clergy. *State* v. *Upton*, 513

Vide *New Trial*, 4.

VERDICT, SPECIAL.

Vide *New Trial*, 2.

1. The probate of a will, under the act of 1784, sec. 5, is good, if the place of its deposit be proved by one witness only. *Doe ex dem. of Galloway et al.* v. *Roe and Peter Yates*, 296
2. The wife of a sole executor of a will, her husband having renounced, is a competent witness to prove its execution as a will of land. *Daniel et al.* v. *Proctor et al.* 428

Vide *Jurisdiction*, 6.

WRIT.

1. The indorsement of an attorney on a writ is only *prima facie* evidence of the time when it issued. *Boyden et ux.* v. *Odeneal et ux.* 171

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